Who Wrote The Bible?

Has God Spoken, or Only Man?

CHARLES A. BLANCHARD

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Who Wrote the Bible?

Has God Spoken, or Only Man?

(Formerly "Visions and Voices, or Who Wrote the Bible?")

By

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE - - - - - - - - - - - 9

Proof of the Bible as the most popular and enduring book—Assaults upon its credibility reveal no substantial error—Its overshadowing importance in alone dealing with vital questions and themes—Its relationship to God, to the human soul, to eternity unique in teaching and literature—It alone transforms from savagery to gentleness and love—Countless thousands have suffered and died in its defense—Many present-day Biblical teachers and professors allied with agnosticism—Allegiance to the Word an urgent, solemn duty to all who honor God—The Bible the only hope of the human race.

CHAP.

I—IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION - - - 13

Value of memorizing Scripture—Indifference to Biblical authorship, "What difference does it make?"—Historical accuracy a necessary test—The Bible the only revelation from God—Comparison with so-called sacred books—What if the moral teachings of the Eastern World supplanted the Bible?—What infidels dare not assail—When infidels keep silence—Marvelous changes wrought by the Word of God.

II—THE BIBLE STATEMENT AS TO THE FACTS; OR, WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS FOR ITSELF - - 28

External and internal evidence—Wrong principles of examination—The Bible's amazing survival of time and stress—Vast present-day circulation—Its preeminence above all books—Two thousand New Testament manuscripts extant—"The Lord spake," "The Lord said"—Mosaic authorship proved beyond doubt

—Scripture's unrivaled diction and style—Undertone of Divine authority throughout.

III—How Could God Write a Book? - - 43
Inspiration simple and natural—The source of all human communication—Could sinful men write such a book?—Books men write usually die; the Bible endures—Human authorship faced with a thousand difficulties—The Bible the Word of God.

IV—Visions and Voices - - - - - - 50
"A more sure word of prophecy"—Mr. Spurgeon on evidence—The promises of God abide—Their impressiveness never wanes—Speaking with tongues—Paul's estimate of the gift—Its purpose nearly if not altogether useless—Visions and voices pass away, the Word remains—Death-bed repentances.

V—Should We Say That We Believe or That We Know? - - - - - - - - - 62
God has made it possible for us to "Know" —Origin of Locke's "Human Understanding" —Sources of knowledge, seen and unseen—The needle and the anvil—The cross of Christ—Napoleon's belief and testimony—Grave duty of those who hold the faith—Speak the Word of God faithfully.

VI—What Do We Mean by Inspiration? - 73
True meaning of "Inspiration" oftentimes obscured—Careless use of words—Men's convictions as shifting sands—What "Inspiration" means—The inspiration of illumination, of suggestion, of words—Proofs of inspiration many and infallible—Unique character of the Bible—Its mighty achievements must rest on the supernatural.

VII—What Is a Miracle? - - - - - 82
The word defined—The conceit of the present age—The dangers of great scientific attainment—Professed atheists now comparatively few—Government of universe by exact and intelligent laws cannot be denied—Belief

in God, belief in miracles a necessary consequence—Can man place a limit to God's power?—His Omnipotence—Jonah's mission to Nineveh, its purpose and threatened failure—The miracle lost in the greater issue—A wide view of the subject—Jewish commemoration of the escape from Egypt—Every synagogue throughout the world bears testimony today to miracles wrought in Egypt.

VIII—Is the Age of Miracles Past? - - 99
Miracle-working today a live fact—Deliverances from demoniacal power very real—Comparison with physical healing—The outward miracles of Our Lord a means to an end—Cleansing of the Spirit a greater miracle—Miracles of healing today innumerable and carefully attested—The remarkable case of Jenny Smith—God *can* and *will* work miracles when necessary—The discrimination of God—Dishonoring unbelief stays the Almighty Hand—His rewards and wonder-working power for those who see His face, hear and obey His voice.

IX—The Man Christ Jesus - - - - - 118
His dual nature clearly set forth in Scripture—The Man Christ Jesus, the everlasting Father—A familiar objection stated—Christ's authority for Scripture—Can modern learning overrule Omniscience?—Old Testament a battleground—Our Lord's repeated use of Old Testament Scriptures—Quoted in conflict with Satan—The authoritative, "It is written," "It is written"—Christ extended and intensified the law—"I came not to destroy but to fulfil"—The Divine command was to "Search the Scriptures"—Would Christ urge the study of error and misrepresentation?

X—Did the Prophets Foretell? - - - 131
The work of the prophets—They prophesied both doom and deliverance—The judgments they foretold accepted without question—

Babylon a widespread desolation—Tyre a collection of miserable huts—A great Sacrifice for sin foreshadowed from the earliest times—Until the coming of Jesus sacrifices were in universal use—Why then have blood offerings now ceased throughout the entire world?—Isaiah fifty-three a full-length portrait of Jesus Christ as a sufferer—Isaiah also foretells Him as reigning King—The case of the Jews—Palestine to be redeemed—Jesus will come to reign.

XI—The Pickax and Spade - - - - - 142

Geology reveals much of the thought of God in creation—The work of excavation in Bible lands of recent development—Thousands of inscriptions unearthed—Restored monuments confirm Bible narratives—In many instances Higher Criticism directly refuted—No tablet or inscription yet found that contradicts a single Biblical statement of fact—The testimony of pickax and spade not yet concluded—Greater and more important discoveries not improbable.

XII—Why Do We Believe the Miracles of the Bible to Have Been Wrought? - - 150

The testimony of Jesus to miracles—The miracle of Jonah used as a warning to His disciples of His approaching death—Could Christ trifle with historic fact on so solemn an occasion?—The miracles of Jesus certified to His Divine nature—"If you do not believe Me, believe the works"—The history of the Christian church a miracle—Missionary effort a miracle—The church built and received on the truth of supernatural works—Sharp distinction between the miracles of the Bible and e.g., spiritualistic "miracles" of our time—The difference between daylight and darkness—The apostles earnestly and at once declared and preached the resurrection.

XIII—Modern Miracles - - - - - - 161
Alleged miracles of Spiritualism, Roman Catholicism and Christian Science—Demons have power to work miracles (Rev. 13:13)—Humble souls perhaps permitted in the name of Jesus Christ to work signs and wonders—We are surrounded by spirit intelligences—"Miracles" frequently no more than momentary ecstasies or other forms of excitement—Systems of men rather than of Christ—Do not lead to holiness of character—Our Saviour outlawed by secret societies—The miracles of the Bible lead to repentance, to restitution, to faith and joy—Fictitious miracles lead merely to wonder—"Some people so constituted that they can believe anything except the truth"—Unbelievers rarely acquainted with God's Word—The natural wonders of the Bible.

XIV—A Few Words in Conclusion - - 178
God's providence to the author in enabling him to leave the testimony of this book—His desire that others should share his faith in the disputed things of Scripture—Belief in the miracles leaves little room for doubt in anything else—A privilege to share these reflections with other fellow travelers to the judgment bar of God—Visions and voices less important than the precious words God has written for our learning—We may say "I know" rather than "I believe"—May the Book become more and more the man of our counsel, the light to our feet, the lamp to our path—"Heaven and earth shall pass away but My Word shall not pass away."

PREFACE.

The Bible is the most popular book in the world. Books usually die in their youth, but the Bible, begun about four thousand years ago and completed nearly two thousand years ago, seems endowed with perpetual life. Last year (1915) there were over twenty-nine million copies of Scripture, either whole or in part, printed. This is in itself a miracle.

The Bible is the only book in the world which is really up to date. It has been scrutinized and assailed as no other book ever was, yet it has never been convicted of substantial error. Books of science and history are continually shown to be mistaken or defective, but the most that critics of the Bible have been able to do has been to find some errors in transcription of spelling or numbers.

The Bible alone attempts to answer the great questions natural to the human soul and which every sane man must ask. "If a man die, shall he live again?" "How can a man be just with God?" "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" "Where shall I spend eternity?"

The Bible is the only book that transforms human character. Men and women by thou-

sands have been lifted from baseness to nobility of life by the Bible. Many are alive today and ready to testify to the facts in the case.

Communities and nations have in like manner been transformed by the Bible. We can trace the course of naked, man-eating savage tribes from barbarism to gentleness and civilization through the influence of the blessed Word of the Bible and its effect on savagery, superstition, vice and crime.

It is not strange that such a book should be assailed. We do not wonder when we read that its translators, teachers and followers have been strangled, beheaded, burned, drowned and by thousands have died for this Wonderful Book on bloody fields.

It is, however, strange that today men who profess to believe the Bible and are paid for teaching it should join hands with the Paines, Voltaires and Ingersolls of our race to destroy the faith of the people in this Book. I do not understand their motives, but I do know the deadly work they are doing, and I entreat all men who honor God or wish well to humanity to resist their desperately evil assaults on this the only hope of the human race.

THE AUTHOR.

VISIONS AND VOICES
OR
WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

CHAPTER I.

IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION.

Dr. Greene of Princeton University said years ago in one of his great addresses respecting the authenticity and integrity of the Bible that formerly the question respecting that Book was, "What does the Bible mean?" "At the present time," said he, "the question is far more fundamental. It is, What is the Bible?" The view which most of us of mature age were taught when we were children was that the Bible was God's Word. We were not taught to discriminate between inspiration of illumination, inspiration of suggestion, plenary inspiration and inspiration verbal. We simply believed that God had revealed His will in His Word. In those days we used to memorize large portions of the Book. In our Sabbath schools this was the method usu-

ally pursued. That was before the days of pupils' helps, teachers' helps, superintendents' helps and helps of all kinds. I do not here raise the question of relative values. Undoubtedly there have been improvements in certain particulars. It is doubtful, however, whether all of them combined are sufficient to fill up the gap left by the failure to memorize. In one of our conferences held recently, Rev. J. D. Williams of St. Paul set the entire company to memorizing the first chapter of Hebrews. I think without exception it was found to be a delightful exercise. Personally I can testify that I greatly enjoyed it.

This question aside, however. The fact of which I wish specially to speak is that in those early days the Bible was believed to be a word which God had spoken for the guidance of His people. At the present time this view is doubted or denied by many who profess to be teachers of the Book. I remember to have heard a minister in a local conference say not many years ago, "We must sift the errors out of the Bible." This gentleman could not speak English thoroughly well, but he felt entirely competent to correct the writings of men who finished their work thousands of years before he was born. It would seem that

such a statement would be looked upon as an empty trifling with a serious subject and allowed to pass as such. Unfortunately it is not so, but many men who seemingly should know better are affected by such words as these.

"What Difference Does It Make?"

Every now and again when some of these persons who are unsettling the foundations of faith in the church are called to account, they say, "Well, what difference does it make who wrote the Bible? It is good anyway. Why peril the whole Book by insisting upon authorship? You cannot certainly prove that the Book is from God. Whether it was from Him or from a man, what odds does it make, provided it is true? If the ten commandments require righteousness and condemn sin, how does it concern us whether Moses wrote them or some other good man or even a bad man?" It is noticeable that those who hold this view of authorship have very loose views as to the portion of the Bible which is true. Beginning by denying that it is from God and saying that it makes no difference whether it is from Him or not *if it be true,* they proceed to deny that it is true. The books of Moses are a pious forgery. Historic and scientific

errors abound in them. The book of Job has no historic value. Job was not a historic character. The book of Job is a production of the imagination, etc., etc., and this class of men who began years ago with the Old Testament have now proceeded to question and deny the books of the New. One of them is reported to have said, "We have finished up the Old Testament, now we will take hold of the New." What he seemed to mean was that the alleged "reverent and free criticism" of our time had proved the Old Testament to be unhistoric, unauthentic and valueless as an authority and that this same "free and reverent" criticism was about to do for the New Testament what it had already accomplished for the Old.

Moral and Spiritual Teaching.

Those who thus trifle with the Word of God are accustomed to say that the Bible was not intended to teach history and science but morals and religion; that it was not intended to show men "how the heavens go but how to go to heaven." The inference expressed or implied is that if the Bible states falsehoods respecting history and teaches error in science, nevertheless it may be a very excellent

guide to conduct; that if it says the heavens go as they do not go, it may, nevertheless, teach men how to go to heaven successfully. Such teaching as this seems to entirely forget the solidarity which belongs to human character and human production. If a man were known to be entirely honest in one section of his character, and careless, untruthful, dishonest and dishonorable in another, the fact that he was in part righteous would not favor his standing in the community as an honest man and would unquestionably throw doubt on everything that he might say or do. It would be an impossible defense for him to say, "I tell the truth on moral subjects, I only misrepresent and falsify when I come to questions of history or science."

That the Bible is not intended chiefly as a textbook in human learning is unquestionably true; but if the Bible is untruthful or untrustworthy in its statements on this subject, no thoroughly sane man will accept it as an authority regarding conduct and destiny. It has what might be called an average value. This is true of any book; it is also true of the Bible. "From one, know all" is an old motto which cannot be pressed too far but which certainly has an application here. If the Pentateuch

throughout represents itself as the word of Moses when in fact it is a compilation of documents the oldest of which was written five hundred years after Moses died, then its pretense to Mosaic authorship is a lie. The fact that men who criticize the Bible do not use this term freely is no reason why we should omit it. Lying is lying no matter what it is called, and for men to declare that representations which the Bible makes concerning itself are not trustworthy, are not reliable, means simply that they are not true. It is simpler and better that men should say precisely what they mean in a language which can be understood.

In the book of Job we are told that there was a man in the land of Uz who bore this name. His character is described and events are set forth said to have occurred during a portion of his life. There is no hint in the book from beginning to end that the writing is a parable or consists of any other form of symbolic teaching. The teaching is clear, "there was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job."

So Jonah is named in his own prophecy as a man. The work which he was called to do is specified. His attempt to avoid that task is described. His after obedience is set forth

and the results thereof. Now if one man should speak to another man sitting in his own parlor as the Bible speaks of these men, not to mention others, and if thereafter it should be found that there were no such individuals as were named, that no such events as he declared to have occurred ever took place, he would be looked upon simply as a liar. What is more, he would be one, and if his neighbors learned the facts in the case his character for truth and veracity would be destroyed.

Yes or No.

Is the Bible God's word or man's word or an indefinite, undefined mixture of the two? This is a plain man's question and an honest scholar should give a straightforward answer. Millions of human beings have gone into eternity relying upon the representations made in this Book. Right or wrong, good or ill, they have believed that they have here a revelation from Almighty God. A dying man has a right to the truth. A living man has a right to it, but to deceive one who is pushing off from the world into the vast and unknown eternity seems to be a specially wicked transaction. It is greatly to be desired that men

who profess to expound the Scriptures should make up their minds in regard to this matter. The question of the authorship of the Bible is not an unimportant question. It deserves a simple, straightforward answer which a common man can understand. To throw a flood of ink into the question as the cuttlefish darkens the water when pursued by an enemy, is a procedure which cannot be admired from the standpoint of Christianity or manhood.

Hundreds of thousands of ministers are taking texts from the Bible from which to preach sermons. Millions of children are being taught in our Lord's Day schools that in some way or other this Book contains a revelation from God which ought to control their lives. Tens of thousands of simple men believe that if they could adjust their lives to this Book they would get help against their sins. Tens of thousands of sick and burdened people read the words of Jesus, the Psalms of David or the Gospel of John and find rest and comfort because they believe these words to be divine. These people are living in a fool's paradise if that Book is not what it professes to be. No man has a right to say that the question of authorship is unimportant. No man has a right to say that the truth is true

no matter who says it and that therefore we may dismiss the question of Biblical authorship as unimportant. If God wrote this Book, then men can rely upon it. If man wrote the Book, men cannot rely upon it, for while it may be true in streaks or spots it is not reliable as a book and therefore should never be placed before the public as a safe guide to conduct. Whatever men may hold respecting the authorship of the Bible, they have no right to hold, to believe or to teach that the question of its origin is an unimportant one.

Bible or Nothing.

Among the many reasons for the importance of this question is the fact that if the Bible is not a revelation from God then we have no such revelation. There have been many so-called sacred books. The scholarship of the world has been digging at them for a hundred years or more. Many of them have been translated into English. All of them have a clear and well-defined character. The Koran, the bible of the Mohammedans, is accessible to anyone who wishes to know what it teaches. Max Mueller's work on the holy books of India is known to all scholars. Missionaries have been working in China for more than a

hundred years, and the teachings of Confucius are as accessible as the orations of Wendell Phillips or Charles Sumner. From time to time learned men from pagan lands have visited our country for the purpose of advertising and recommending their religions. We have already quite a large number of joss-houses and Buddhist temples in this country. These writings can be tested and compared with the Bible as to their doctrine of man, of sin, and of salvation. Their teachings concerning the character and state of women and children can be ascertained. World study has now gone forward so far that the home life, the political institutions, the industrial conditions, the mercantile customs, the educational view of heathen nations, can be known as well as those of our own country.

I do not hesitate to say that there has never been revealed in connection with the study of the holy books of the world anything which would lead a sane and honest man to propose for a single instant a substitution of some other bible for our Bible. I think that Hindus, Chinamen and Persians, even those who are yet idolators among them, would admit that the Bible in its moral teachings, in its social and political influence is immeasurably

superior to the customs which they have considered divine. Who would, for example, even suggest that the position of women and children in Christian lands should be altered to conform to the teachings of the sacred books of the Eastern world? What teacher would propose that a wife should worship her husband, should wash his feet and drink the water in which she had washed them? What teacher would propose the adoption of the Chinese method of disposing of wives and children? What teacher, even an Oriental, if he had fairly good sense, would propose foot-binding as a universal custom for the women of the world?

If now our own Bible is infinitely superior to these other bibles, how unfortunate it would be if it should prove in the end that our Bible has gained its position through misrepresentation and falsehood, that it is in reality not God's book but man's. Undoubtedly it would have a certain place in human life because of its proved excellence, but as soon as it had been decided that its claims to divine origin are false, that it cannot be relied upon to tell the truth about itself or about historic and scientific facts, no man would consider himself bound by its teachings. Men who wished to

hallow the Lord's Day would hallow it. Those who did not wish to hallow it would treat it as a common thing and would not be condemned by their consciences for so doing. Men who wished to live clean lives would lead them. Men who did not wish to live clean lives would become vile and corrupt without the sense of shame and guilt which now is part of the penalty visited upon their transgressions. Civil laws which have been established because of Christian teaching would more or less rapidly lose their preeminence and we should find that the social, industrial and political life of our own country would approximate that of China, India, Turkey or Africa.

I remember that when I first read the chapter on the penalties inflicted in China on actual or alleged criminals it made me sick for days. I could not think of the sufferings inflicted on poor human bodies without the keenest distress, but if we have no Bible we are to look on chapters in human history like that as really divine as are the manners and customs of Christian lands.

Who Wrote the Bible?

Who wrote the Bible? There is no ques-

tion at the present time before the thoughtful people of the world more important than this, and the answer will determine for good or ill the lives of millions of men and women like those who read these words. Archimedes said if you would give him a fulcrum on which to rest his lever he would move the world. He never found the place to rest his lever and the world has gone on in its old-fashioned way from his day to the present time. The Bible is a fulcrum on which the religious teachers of the world have rested their levers for the purpose of lifting the human race to a clearer atmosphere. Wherever the Bible has gone results have followed which are most desirable even in the opinions of godless men. Infidels with their smooth tongues and their hard faces have never dared to assail the domestic life which has been produced by Bible lovers in Bible lands. On the contrary they laud this and speak as if it might be produced without the Book which alone has caused it. But when they are asked to furnish the evidence, to show the homes in the countries where gentleness, purity, honesty and helpfulness prevail apart from the influence of the Word of God, a great silence comes over them. They say that the

Bible is not the cause of the results which every thoughtful man attributes to it, which no thoughtful man can attribute to any other force in human society, but they do not tell what *will* do this work.

I close this chapter asking all who read it to seek to imagine what would be the condition of the world today if the Bible had never been known. I urge them to compare the conditions of the lands where the Bible is known with the condition of the lands where it is not known. I urge them to ask the question what it was which began the change from savagery to civilization. There are a thousand things in Christendom which we must look upon with shame and sorrow. The present world war is the latest great example, but all those who are fairly well informed know that the Bible is not chargeable with the crimes which its enemies or its half-friends commit. No man who knows what the teachings of Jesus Christ are will declare that this war or any other war is a result of living according to those teachings. In the Bible we are commanded to think upon the things which are lovely and of good report. We are charged to avoid all those spiritual states and acts which lead to the wholesale murders

which are now going forward throughout the world. There are a few of us, perhaps, who have seen in individuals, in homes, in communities, the marvelous changes wrought by the Word of God. We have therefore a right to insist upon our question, Who wrote the Bible? If God has not written it, why has it produced the marvels it has wrought? If God did not write it, what shall we do for guidance in conduct for ourselves and those depending upon us? More important than questions of industrial life or government policy is this great question as to the authorship of this wonderful Book.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIBLE STATEMENT AS TO THE FACTS OR WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS FOR ITSELF.

Dr. Bowne in his "Psychological Foundations" contrasts the method of rigor and vigor with the rational method. He says that the method of rigor and vigor requires us to use no terms which are not defined and no propositions which are not proved; that the rational method requires us to accept terms in their ordinary meaning unless there is a reason for rejecting them, to believe statements to be true unless there is some reason for doubt. He says truly that under the method of rigor and vigor it is impossible to get anywhere; that in every science, as in geometry, there must be universally admitted truths lying at the foundations and from these universally admitted truths we may pass to truths which are not obvious in themselves.

To doubt everything that can be doubted and to believe only that which is proved is a method for the insane rather than for

rational beings. An objector might ask, "Why do you wish to know what the Bible says for itself? Of course the Bible will speak well of itself. This is naturally true. But it is poor evidence. We need to establish the divine character of the Bible from outside testimony rather than from its own statements." It may be admitted that one's own testimony must be accepted with a measure of doubt. Corroboration in such a case will always be in order. At the same time the testimony which a man or a book or an institution bears concerning itself is always important, and in the case of the Bible certainly ought to be understood and, if corroborated by sufficient proofs, may be accepted. If there should prove to be real evidence going to show that the Bible's claims for itself as to origin and character are not true, these evidences must be weighed. Everything must be fairly considered. The rule here is the rule which we should follow everywhere.

Assume Nothing, Deny Nothing, Test Everything.

Every once in a while I run across a statement something like this: "The Bible is literature and must be regarded like all other

literature. We must examine and test it just as we do other books." This statement has an appearance of truth and yet contains a fatal error. Supposing accusations should be made against the character of the mother of the person who is reading these words. He is told that his mother is a human being like all other people and that the charges against her ought to be regarded by him just as similar charges against any other woman would be. My reader would probably say, "Well, but I know my mother, I have known her ever since I was a little child. I know what sort of a woman she is and I will not examine the charges affecting her character as I would those of a person I did not know at all or one whom I knew to be of evil character. I mean to accept proofs and testimony, but I shall require more and different evidences to establish charges against my mother than I would require to establish charges against a person who was a stranger or one whose character I knew to be bad." Every reasonable person would say that my reader was speaking quite within his rights, that he would not only be unfilial but that he would be a fool to examine charges against one whom he had known for, let us say, forty

years, as a worthy and excellent person, in exactly the same temper and state of mind with which he would come to the study of similar charges against a person of different character.

I think the application of this remark is obvious. The Bible has been in the world in part for about four thousand years. It has had a completed existence for near two thousand years. It has been scrutinized as no other book ever has been. Friends and foes alike have devoted years of patient, persevering study to its books and pages. The one class of men have endeavored to ascertain whether it was evil or not; the other have endeavored to prove it evil. It has been translated as no other book in the history of the world ever was translated. It is printed today in nearly or quite five hundred different languages, and whenever a savage people is discovered in some out-of-the-way corner of the world, one of the first things that the missionary does is to create a language for the people and then put the Bible into their native tongue. We have here, then, a Book which has existed in completed form for nearly two thousand years and which has been already put into over five hundred different languages.

Here are two searching tests, but there is a third.

This Book in place of being a book for curious scholars has everywhere been recognized as a book for the common people. There are, it is true, costly editions printed, editions costing in single copies scores or hundreds of dollars. On the other hand, it is printed in editions of the cheapest sort so that the whole Bible has been sold for twenty-five cents or about that. The volumes printed annually have increased in number from the beginning until now. Last year, 1915, the publication reached high-water mark, over twenty-nine millions of copies of the whole or portions of the Word of God having been put out during those twelve months—over eight million by the British and Foreign Bible Society, over six million by the American Bible Society, over three million by the Scottish Bible Society, about one million by the Oxford Press, and thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands by other publishers. Here is a most remarkable fact. Some infidel comes along writing a little book filled with blasphemies and vagaries and says, "My book is literature and the Bible is literature. You are to examine what I say

against the Bible candidly and with the same willingness to accept it that you give to what the Bible says concerning itself." This is absurd beyond the limits of impudence. If my friend who says we must treat the Bible as literature would say we must treat the Bible as we treat all other literature *of the same class,* that would do. That is a rational position to occupy. But to treat literature which has been tested through thousands of years by millions of people as we treat the vagaries or even the excellent work of writers who have as yet failed to produce a deep and permanent impression upon the world, is simple nonsense. Take the matter of manuscripts alone. I do not profess to speak with authority, but men who do, tell us that for Cæsar, Virgil, Ovid, Xenophon, Thucydides, Aristophanes or other classic writers a score or two of copies of manuscripts is about all that we can generally find. It is from this score or two of manuscripts that questions of text are determined and place in the literary world is made out. On the other hand, the New Testament furnishes us something like two thousand manuscripts, the Old Testament hundreds more, and this although it is known that for many years both civil and ecclesiasti-

cal authority was exerted to the utmost to destroy all copies of this Book. No one ever gathered copies of the classic writers, piled them in courtyards and burned them, but this has been commonplace in the history of the Word of God, and yet we are asked to treat the Bible as literature, to assume nothing for it that we cannot assume for the ignoble work of men whose writings never have had its vast circulation and which are at the present time valued only by a few students.

To the Place of Beginning.

I therefore return to the question with which I started, What does the Bible say for itself? Does it make any declarations as to its origin? If so, what are they? We certainly have a right to hear them. Whether they shall be accepted or not will depend. If they are clearly irrational and contradictory, we must reject them. If they have an appearance of truth and if there is no contradicting evidence, then we must accept them. We must deal honestly with the Book. This is required by common sense and common fairness.

One of the first facts which we meet when we begin this discussion is the continual re-

currence of the expressions "The Lord said," "The Lord spake," "The Lord said," "The Lord spake." I have never counted the number of times that these expressions occur in the Word of God, but that they are so common they must be numbered by hundreds of times all Bible readers know. When the Bible says, "And the Lord said," and "The Lord spake," what is the obvious inference? It is that God communicated the words which follow to some writer who recorded them and that they have been preserved from that day until this present time. There is perhaps no one alleged author of the Bible whose work has been so sharply criticized as that of Moses, yet more frequently than in the case of any other individual do we have this expression associated with his name, "And the Lord said unto Moses," and "the Lord spake unto Moses," and finally we have it recorded that the Lord told Moses to write in a book things which He had spoken to him. And the record goes on to say that Moses did what God told him to do. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end

of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law" (Deut. 31, verses 9 to 12). And again in the same chapter, verse 22, we find these words: "Moses therefore wrote this song the same day and taught it to the children of Israel." And in the 24th to 26th verses, "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of the writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." The whole tenor of the book is in this same line though the thought is not always so positively expressed. It seems as if God laid the emphasis on the work which was to be denied or else

that infidel writers have chosen to deny that which God had particularly emphasized. But though there is no other author whose connection with the Book is so positively and so frequently examined, there is throughout the whole series of books of the Bible a clear claim of divine authority for the things which are written.

Job, another of the books which is frequently questioned as to authenticity, is referred to in the New Testament as an evidence of the promise-keeping of God. The saints are taught to think of Job and to see how merciful God is to His believing ones. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy" (Jas. 5:12). We have also in the New Testament the explicit declaration that all the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God and are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16). And Peter says substantially the same thing in his second letter, first chapter, verses 19-21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the

day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And finally, we have in the last chapter of the Book these wonderful words: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." It is admitted that these imprecations have special reference to the book of Revelation, but it seems to me as if they have also backward reference that should make all people who deal lightly and carelessly with the prophets or history in the different books of the Bible very much afraid.

So Much for the Positive.

On the other hand, there is no intimation in the Book from beginning to end that

any considerable portion of it is written without divine authority. The only exceptions, I believe, are those where Paul once or twice says that he speaks certain things not by commandment but of himself; and in another case where he says that he *believes* himself to have the Spirit of God. There is here no denial of the divine supervision and control, but it is admitted that expressions of this kind cast a certain measure of doubt on the particular passages with which they are connected. If, however, these should be rejected, the Book would remain in every essential particular what it is today. We have therefore this singular state of fact in reference to the Bible's claim for itself. Wherever it speaks definitely as to authorship and responsibility, it claims for itself divine authority. Nowhere except in the two or three small instances above referred to is there any intimation that God is not the responsible Author of the whole work. We therefore conclude that it is the purpose of the Bible to claim for itself divine authorship. If this is not true, if the Bible did come by the will of men rather than by inspiration of God, if it was not written by holy men as God directed them, then the Book is in many in-

stances evidently lying and throughout seems to be endeavoring to secure faith for a fraud. It is a fair question whether or not a book having the general character of the Bible could possibly be a book of this description. Liars and cheats have usually a reason for cheating and lying. If the Bible was written by men without divine impulse and if these men who wrote the Bible in this manner wished to get the world to believe that there was a godly origin for the Book, then certainly we should expect the Book to show in its character marks of this sort of an origin. We should not expect it to be high in moral tone, lofty in diction and style, but the shabby spirit which animated it we should expect to clothe itself in shabby dress. On the other hand, it is claimed, I believe, by those who wish to study the Bible simply as literature, that never since the thoughts of men were recorded in permanent form has there been a book written which in diction and style compares for a moment with this Book. The wonderful poems of David expressing so beautifully the universal longings of the human heart, the orations of the patriot prophets Isaiah, Ezekial, Jeremiah, the limpid, crystal-clear biographies, all these seem to be

absolutely inconsistent with the theory that the Bible is the work of a number of cheap, deceitful, fraud-loving men. If we meet a man on the street and he tells us that his name is Smith, Jones or Brown, we naturally believe that what he says is true. If we see that he has a hangdog look, if we find that he is accustomed to change his dwelling often without settling his rent, if we learn that he has been arrested a few times and on each occasion has given a different name, we naturally question about Smith, Jones or Brown as the case may be. But if we find that the man looks us squarely in the face and his eyes are clear and honest, his tones unfaltering; if we find that his reputation is that of an honest, industrious, truthful man, then we accept his statement that his name is Smith, Jones or Brown. If someone chooses to throw doubt upon it on the ground that many men tell lies, that there are a great many persons traveling under aliases, we say, Nevertheless, this man looks like an honest man, acts like an honest man, speaks like an honest man. Until we have some specific charge of bad faith to bring aginst him we accept his statement at face value and we believe that he is Smith, Jones or Brown.

The Bible is entitled to similar treatment. In many instances it explicitly declares itself to record words which God Himself said. Through the entire sixty-six books this claim to divine authority is an undertone felt if not distinctly uttered. In a number of instances the claim to divine authority is set up in a general way. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." The word "scripture" used here had a clearly defined meaning. No Jew had any doubt as to what it meant. It referred primarily to the Old Testament. It referred in a secondary way to those portions of the New Testament which were already written, and this claim must be accepted until there is some reason for doubt. The method of rigor and vigor is an absolute failure. It breaks down at the very threshold of human reasoning. We are not to doubt everything we can doubt and to believe only that which is proved; but if we wish to act rationally, we must believe what is affirmed to be true until we have some reason for questioning. And this reason must be a definite, positive reason; general remarks about the uncertainty of human testimony, etc., etc., have no standing in the court of reason any more than they have in a court of law.

CHAPTER III.

HOW COULD GOD WRITE A BOOK?

At times men have said to me as if they were asking a question impossible of reply, You do not suppose that God dictated the Bible as you dictate a letter to a stenographer, do you? And I answer, Why not? We stumble here on the question of thought communication. Everyone knows that we communicate our thoughts and feelings by words, looks and acts. If a man scowls, shakes his fist in my face and advances toward me in a threatening manner, I do not have to ask him how he is feeling. I know how he is feeling. This is one of the common methods of communicating feeling. Thoughts are usually expressed in words or by actions. If I say to a man, "Which way did that man go?" and he points down the street or says, "He went down the street," in either case I know the thought which has passed through his mind. If a person writes a letter to me and I am able to understand the language which he uses, I know his thoughts because I read them ex-

pressed in words. These are the common methods of expressing thoughts among human beings.

But supposing God wished to talk with men, as the Bible over and again affirms that He did. What then? Shall we imagine that it will be difficult for God to communicate His thoughts because He has not a body like a man, because He cannot speak into our ears or write a communication for our eyes? It would seem to be an absurd statement to say that God Who has made man cannot communicate His thoughts to the men whom He has made. If men are able to communicate their thoughts to one another and God is not able to communicate His thoughts to them, it seems that they are in essential particulars greater than He. When, therefore, someone asks me how God could write a book, I ask him how men write books, and I say to him that undoubtedly God is as capable of writing a book as a man is; that if He chooses to write one, undoubtedly He will be able to do it.

Let us, however, go a step farther than this general affirmation. We ourselves are spirits housed in organisms and operating through them. Our voices do not speak words which the voices determine but words

which our minds determine. Our hands do not write words which the hands decide upon, they write words which our minds decide upon. We do not express in looks or words thoughts which arise in the skin or in the vocal organs or in the muscles, but we express thoughts and feelings which arise in our inner being. This is the source of all human communication. From within, out of the heart, proceed not only the evil deeds of men but the good deeds of men.

Death to us is commonplace. "There is no flock howe'er so well defended but one dead lamb is there," and we know that when the body has dropped away, the spirit can no longer employ it for the expression of its ambitions, hopes and fears. Do we, therefore, imagine the spirit to be dead and powerless? There is a little handful of Christian people who thus believe, but the vast majority of men and women of Christian faith have believed and believe now that when the body has dropped away the spirit can communicate its thoughts and perform its acts much more fully and freely than now. It would be a singular faith that should lead us to believe that the millions of persons who have gone into eternity are shut up each to his own in-

dividual life. I do not think anyone believes this to be possible. If not, then the spirit must be able to communicate with spirit without physical resources, and if finite spirits can communicate with finite spirits, surely the Infinite Spirit can communicate with finite spirits.

God in Human Form.

No person who believes in God at all doubts that He can assume human form if He desires to do so. If God can create human forms for the occupation of finite spirits, certainly He could create a human form for the housing of His own Infinite Spirit if He wished to do so. This is the explanation of the being of our Lord Jesus Christ, manifested in the flesh.

Reflection on this subject will show that if God wishes to dictate a message to any of His people it is a simple thing for Him to do so. He could if He pleased speak into the ears of men or He could control the hands of men so that they should write the things that He wished them to write and nothing else. In this manner He seems to have given to David the directions for building the temple (I Chronicles 28:19). There is no limit to the

methods in which God might have dictated the Bible to His servants if He desired to do so.

If we choose to believe those who deny divine authority to the Word of God and affirm human authorship, we should be landed in a thousand difficulties. In the first place, how could sinful men write a book which is so lofty in moral tone as the Bible, commanding everything that is right, forbidding everything wrong and denouncing the most fearful judgments upon people who will not do things which are right? How could men have ever deliberately set out to write a law like this? Allow that the Book is man's work, and how are we to account for the fact that it frankly sets forth the follies and failures of God's people? We should never have known that Noah got drunk except that the Bible had told us so. We may be quite sure that courtiers would never have recorded the sins of David. There is no record anywhere so far as known of his failure in moral character except in the Word of God. The disciples of our Lord Himself were, according to their own account, full of human frailty. They disputed for preeminence even in the shadow of His cross; and Peter, one of the chiefest of

them, one who is by the Roman church considered its founder, received that frightful rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan." It is not customary for men to recite their own failures, to put them into permanent form where after ages will think of them. If men wrote the Book, how are we to account for the fact that men in such social and intellectual surroundings should have written a Book which is a model of composition for all after ages? University professors by the score are now busying themselves with the Bible as literature, some of them are committing large portions of it to memory and earning fees for reciting it. Others of them are writing literary criticisms on it as a means of getting money. It is incredible that men of the Jewish race, two or three thousand years ago, should have created a literature which is a model for all the ages since.

If this was man's Book, how are we to account for its continued life? Books which men write generally die. They become out of date, worn out. New books supplant them. Everyone knows how this is in regard to hymn books for our churches and Sabbath schools. There is a stream of new writings all the while. Everyone knows how it is in science.

A scientific book ten years old is generally out of date. Yet here is a Book which has lived on for two thousand years and in place of seeming about to perish it has a wider circulation today than ever before.

No matter in what direction you turn, if you accept the theory of human authorship you are landed in the midst of difficulties. If, on the other hand, God is the author of the Book, its moral tone, its literary character and its ever-increasing life are all explained. If God should take it upon Himself to write a book for the guidance of human beings, we should expect it to be perfect in moral standards; we should expect it to be perfect in literary style; we should know that it would be vital; that it would have in it life, and this is what we have in the Word of God.

CHAPTER IV.

VISIONS AND VOICES.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." What did the Holy Spirit intend when He moved Peter to say, "A more sure word of prophecy"? In the verses which immediately precede this 19th verse of 2nd Peter, Chapter I, Peter had said that the Lord Jesus had shown him that he must shortly die. He says that he was an eye-witness of His Majesty and that he heard a voice certifying to His character from the heavens above saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"; and then he proceeds to say, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed." More sure than what? Perhaps more sure than this personal communication with the Lord Jesus Christ. Possibly more sure than the vision of His transcendent glory, possibly more sure than the voice which

came from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son; we have also a more sure word of prophecy. Why was the word of prophecy more sure than the vision and the voice?

I remember a lady who once told me she was certain she was a Christian, and when I asked her the reason she said because when she was a young child she had a vision of the Lord Jesus. He came into her room, stood at the foot of her bed and told her that she was really a Christian and that she was going to heaven. "Since that time," she said, "I have had no question in my mind about it. I am sure that I am saved." Of course I did not attempt to destroy her faith. It is better to have an ill-founded faith in a truth or in a good thing than to have no faith at all. But how small an evidence she had! How pitiful that she did not have the evidence of a more sure word of prophecy!

Charles Spurgeon said one day in his pulpit, "If an angel from heaven were to meet me as I go into the vestry and say to me, 'Charles Spurgeon, your sins are all forgiven, you are a child of God,' I would say to him, 'It is true I am, but I do not thank you for telling me so. I know it on far better evidence than yours.'" He was speaking on the certainty

of the Word of God and the fact that Christians who believe the Word of God know themselves to be saved, not because of some experiences which they have had, but because of the word which God Himself has spoken. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." This is the word of God. If it is true and one believes it, then he has everlasting life and he does not need an angel to come and assure him of the fact. He has the word of God.

Years ago there was an ignorant lad working in a blacksmith shop not far away from my home who was being badgered by an older Christian who ought to have known better than to do as he did. The older Christian said to him, "Now, you are a Christian; now, you are saved, I suppose?" And the lad said, "Yes, I am." The older one said to him, "How do you know that you are a Christian? How do you know that you are saved?" The babe in Christ did not know what to say, but, availing himself of the Yankee privilege of answering one question by asking another, he said, "Are you saved?" The older man said, "Yes, I am saved, thank God." The lad went on, "How do you know it?" And the older man said, "I have the word of God for it."

This gave the younger man his cue and he said, "So have I."

Feelings change. They change with the wind, with the weather, with physical condition, with spiritual state; but the Word of God does not change. It abides ever the same. If one of my readers should tonight have a vision of Jesus Christ, should hear a voice from heaven assuring him of his acceptance, I do not doubt he would be awed and moved. If he is simply reading the promises of God, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house," he may have no such exultant feeling. This statement was made to the jailor and to all persons in the jailor's situation, and it does not impress him as the vision or the voice would, but the vision and the voice pass while the Word of God abides forever. This is the comfort that comes to those who know the Word of God to be what it professes to be.

Marvels Lose Their Power.

Another fact respecting visions and voices is that by repetition they lose their impressiveness. If a man were to be raised from the dead by the word of a disciple in one of our churches, when the word passed out among

the people crowds would throng to see the place where the marvel had occurred and all of them would hope that they might see something of the same sort; but most of them would not see something of the same sort, and if they did and it were repeated twenty or thirty times, it would largely lose its power. Those who wished to go to hear and to see, would go. But the busy multitudes would say, "We are occupied with life, trying to provide for daily needs. We will let dead men take care of themselves." Perhaps this is the reason why there is such a divine economy of the miraculous in the Word of God. Careless readers think of the Bible as full of miracles, but if they will count they will be disabused of this opinion. There are a number of miracles recorded but these cluster about the deliverance of God's people from Egypt, the coming of our Lord and the establishing of the church. All can see that there was a reason for miracles at such times as these and all can see that, after the people had been established in their own land, after Jesus had come, after He had spoken to the people, had been rejected by His own, had been accepted by the few, after the church had been planted, its teachings had become known and the marvels upon

which it rested for a first faith had been sufficiently certified, then the miracles naturally would drop out. God does not waste His time or His energy. He furnishes evidence enough for the faith of an honest man. A person who will reject sufficient evidence will reject all evidence. If a man will not believe when he has proofs enough to satisfy a reasonable person, he will not believe at all, and God does not seek to force faith. He says, "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned." Saved because he believes the truth, condemned because he rejects the truth. This is plain and reasonable. Anyone can see that it is what ought to be.

Speaking with Tongues.

The principle just stated has something to do with a subject which is awakening much thought in our own time. I refer to speaking with tongues. One of my truest and best friends became so earnest about this gift that he had people praying for him that he might receive it. He did not receive it. He was a thoughtful, earnest Christian man. I think he was occupied by the Holy Spirit. He had been for years. I believe it was a mistake for him to

desire this gift. If he had prayed for the gift of healing, I could have seen more reason for that, or for the gifts of an apostle or of a prophet or of a teacher, but I could never understand why anyone should especially desire the gift of speaking with unknown tongues. I can well understand why a person should desire ability to speak in a language which the public could understand. It seems to me that it would be delightful to be able to go to Japan, to India, to China, to the islands of the sea and speak without the labor of learning the language of the people of those countries. So far as I know, it has never been done since the Day of Pentecost. On that particular occasion when the church was to be launched, men who spoke some fifteen or twenty different languages heard the apostles, Galileans, speaking each man in his mother tongue. There was a reason for this. It was the launching of the Christian church, a movement which has continued with ever-increasing power up to this present moment. I believe that today if there were an equal occasion there would be the same result. I am not disposed to deny, though perhaps I may doubt, that there have been individual instances in which men have acquired languages so rapidly that the work

was practically miraculous; but speaking in tongues, which are not known to the person who speaks and not known to the person who listens, seems to be so nearly useless that one would not believe such a thing to have occurred unless it were stated in the Word of God.

Paul gives a true estimate of this sort of gift when he says, "I would rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue" (I Cor. 14:19). In this connection he says that he speaks with tongues more than all the rest of them. I do not deny that he may have spoken in what is now called tongues. He may have done so. If he did, he did not highly value the gift. Five words of understanding he considered better than ten thousand words of that sort.

Some years since a good woman in our town felt that she ought to go to India as a missionary. She was more than fifty years of age, as deaf as it is possible for a human being to be. As I remember her she could hear absolutely nothing. I remember she said in a farewell meeting in our church, "I suppose it is counted as a sort of insanity for a woman of my age and infirmity to go to In-

dia, but," she said, "in these days God has to work with most anybody He can get." She went out to that country. It was just after the famine. There were literally tens of thousands of children and others nearly dead from starvation. She washed them, fed them and clothed them and was like an angel of mercy. She returned, after about ten years of such service, glad and happy that God had used her as He had.

There are teachers who would say that she could have no evidence that she had received the Holy Spirit unless she could talk in words which nobody understood, not even herself. This seems to me to be not according to reason or Scripture. Whatever we may think of this particular subject, we must believe that the Holy Spirit spoke truthfully and wisely when He said, "We have a more sure word of prophecy."

The Bible Is More Sure than Visions and Voices.

It remains the same through thousands of years. Visions and voices pass away. The Bible can be translated into myriads of tongues. Visions and voices have their little day and pass. The Bible can be examined by

millions of humble, earnest students. It has been examined by millions of such persons, and if the Lord tarry it will still be examined by millions more. But the vision and the voice are for the one or the two who behold or hear and then pass away. The vision and the voice, if they were to be repeated, would lose their power by repetition. The Word of God, repeated from father to son, from mother to daughter, from age to age, and still from age to age, ever grows in power as it becomes a part of the spiritual fiber of man.

I suppose that some of my readers have wished that they might see visions and hear heavenly voices. Perhaps some of them have thought that the evidence of the truth of the Gospel would be more certain if it were thus confirmed. Dives thought thus in Hades. When Abraham said to him that his brothers had Moses and the prophets and that they should listen to them, he said, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." But Abraham said, No, if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, they would not believe if one were to be raised from the dead (Luke 16).

Death-Bed Repentances.

A common experience in the lives of earnest workers confirms this testimony of Abraham. When careless and wicked men are brought down to death, oftentimes they imagine themselves repentant and believing. What the Word has not done, death seems to do. Many times they furnish such testimony that in Christian charity we are bound to accept it and believe they are actually changed. In how many instances, however, do we find it true that with the passage of the fear there is also a loss of the faith? Cases are not unknown, unfortunately they are not rare, where these death-bed repentances have proved to be the introduction to lives of frightful wickedness. At times it seems that the very fear, which has driven men near to God in professed faith, irritates them when they come to health and strength and leads them to grosser wickedness than they have hitherto known. It is safe to say that men who will reject the Word of God will not be seriously affected by anything else. Exceptions here and there there are. I have myself known one man who was converted by an earthquake. He said to me that when he

felt the earth quaking under his feet and saw buildings tottering around him he thought it was time for him to call upon God, but the visions and voices in most instances are valuable for those who believe rather than for those who are yet unrepentant. God may use them for anyone. If man will allow Him to do so, He will, for God is determined to save all men who will willingly be saved. No man is lost of whom our Lord does not say, "You would not come to me that you might be saved."

But we ought to comfort ourselves with the thought of the unshaking Word of God. The marvelous rock of holy Scripture which has withstood the lashing of all seas through all ages will stand when the heavens and the earth have passed away. So if the reader has had doubts and fears and questions as to the sufficiency of evidence, if he has sometimes even in heart if not in language desired marvels that he might believe, let him remember that he has the Lord Jesus who is quite sufficient for his needs. Let him seek to live up to the Word which he has received, and he will find all the evidences that he can desire.

CHAPTER V.

SHOULD WE SAY WE BELIEVE OR THAT WE KNOW?

I raise this question because I believe it to be very important. Should my reader say, I *believe* the Bible is the Word of God, or should he say, I *know* the Bible is the Word of God? I do not remember who it is, but someone defines knowledge as "certainty that something is." To know is to be sure of fact. If I say I believe, there is in the very word the shade of uncertainty. If I say I know, the very utterance helps to confirm faith. Certainly we have no right to say we know if we do not know. A humble, beautiful child of God said to me recently respecting the illness of his wife which had continued through years: "I do not believe we ought to say we have faith when we have not faith." Certainly we ought not nor ought we to say, "I know the Bible to be the Word of God," when in our inmost hearts we doubt. But it is well that we know whether we may know or not.

Knowledge is based upon evidence of some kind. One who does not consider evidence will not know, but one who does honestly consider evidence, if it is sufficient, will know, and if this is our privilege respecting the Word of God, certainly it is also our duty. When we take up the Bible, if it is God's Word and if there is sufficient evidence to enable us to know that it is the Word of God, we ought to know and we should be ready to say, "I know." We have no right to be uncertain if God has made it possible for us to be sure. So I invite my reader to reflect upon the situation and to find out, God helping, whether he has a right to know or not, whether he has a right to say "I know" or not, and having reflected and considered the proofs to take the highest ground which God is willing for him to occupy.

Limits of Human Understanding.

Years ago a company of English scholars were gathered and together were considering some of the great questions respecting Christian faith and human life. They did not seem to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion and finally one of them said, "Is it possible that we are dealing with subjects where certainty

is impossible? Ought we not to raise the question whether or not it is possible for us to arrive at certainty respecting these matters of which we have been speaking?" The result of this suggestion was that Dr. John Locke began his essay on "The Limits of the Human Understanding." It was an epoch-making book and, together with its criticism by the great French philosopher Cousin, would constitute a splendid course in logic for any man who really desired to know how to think. I have not the time here nor have I the disposition to review these two great books, but I desire that the thought which led to the writing of the essay on the limits of the human understanding should be clearly defined in the minds of my friends.

What can a man know and how can a man know it? Of course I have as an ultimate question, Can a man know the Bible to be God's Word or is this one of the things which is left in the region of the uncertain, the undetermined? If the limits of the human understanding are such that we cannot really know whether the Bible is God's Word or not, we must do the best we can. If we may know and if, through intellectual idleness or spiritual sloth, we refuse to consider the evi-

dence and therefore do not arrive at certainty, we ought to repent and do the first works.

Sources of Knowledge.

One of the difficulties with careless thinkers is that they do not understand that different facts may be ascertained through different faculties. The senses give us the external world; we see, we hear, we smell, we taste, we touch, we weigh, we measure, we divide, we add, we subtract, we multiply; and all the while we are dealing with things, objects of sense. This is one of the original and authoritative sources of knowledge. The world of mental activities is not apprehensible by the senses at all. No man ever saw a hope, or smelled a fear, or tasted a desire, or measured a will. Certain nervous reactions which are associated with these psychic movements have been measured, at least as to time, but the things themselves are hidden far away beyond the reach of the senses of man. We know that we love our friends, that we are irritated by careless and wicked people, that we consider different possible lines of activity, that we decide on one line of action or another. These things we know through consciousness. The senses do not help us at all. They may

hinder us. He will arrive at certainty most surely and most quickly who can separate his consciousness from sense activity.

Certain facts we know through testimony. They are not facts of consciousness nor are they objects of sense perception. Some of you know of Pekin, of Yokohama, because you have seen them, but most of us on this side of the water know them by the testimony of other people. Shall we say we know or shall we say we believe? He would be a very foolish man who should affirm that only those can say, I know there is such a city as Pekin, or I know that the sun is about ninety millions of miles distant from the earth, who have themselves personally seen the one or measured the distance to the other. Human testimony, provided it be adequate, is sufficient for knowledge. We shut men up in jail on human testimony, we take away their property or we take away their lives, and we do not do these things because we believe but because we know. Yet our knowledge is derived from testimony, not from sense perception, not from consciousness.

Once more, we derive certain knowledge through the reason not with the intervention of senses, not in or through consciousness as

a source. Suppose someone should tell us that it is true that in this world effects follow causes and that without causes there cannot be effects, but that in Jupiter or in Neptune, in heaven or in hell, there could be changes without forces in operation. What would you say to him? Suppose he should declare that in Jupiter stones moved thousands of miles with no force acting upon them, that buildings were erected without builders, or that books were written without authors, and when I objected he should say, "Well, it is true that in this world in order to get such effects there must be appropriate causes, but in Jupiter things are different." Have I a right to say to him that what he says is not true? The causes of activities in Jupiter may differ from the causes of activities on the earth, but there cannot be changes without forces in operation. Have I a right to say to him, I know this, or should I say, I believe this? If I know, how do I know? Not by the senses, not by consciousness, not by testimony, but by reason, God-given, God-sustained. This is so evident that we should consider a man who declared himself to be uncertain about the matter lacked ordinary common sense. We should look upon him as an idiot or a madman, and we should

properly consider him so, for reason affirms the principle of causality. No change without some force in operation and no force in operation without producing some change. This is an affirmation of the reason. It is quite as positive as the affirmations of sense or consciousness or affirmations based upon testimony.

I remember one of my pastors who once said, speaking of the phrase *I know,* "It is like the sword of Goliath, there is none like it." No man has a right to dwell in the midst of uncertainties when God has made it possible for him to be sure. I have run over this bit of mind study for the purpose of arriving at a satisfactory answer to the question of this chapter. Shall I say, I know the Bible is God's Word, or shall I say, I believe, or I think, or even I hope?

A Needle and an Anvil.

Take a fine cambric needle in your hand and consider it attentively. Look at its shape, feel the smoothness of the lines, the sharpness of the point and look at the delicacy of the eye. Suppose some man should say to you when you ask him who made the needle that a neighbor of his made it with a black-

smith's hammer on an anvil. You have seen hammers and anvils, you know what they are like. You know about the surface of the anvil and the surface of the blacksmith's hammer, and you pause and you reflect and inquire. Your informer insists. He says, Yes, the blacksmith makes those needles on his anvil with a hammer. Do you believe the witness to tell the truth? Can you believe him if you desire? Do you say to him, I doubt your statement, or do you say to him, Your statement is not true? Of course you seek to be courteous and you will put your affirmation into as kindly a language as possible. I am not merely speaking of form, I am speaking of fact. Do you know that the cambric needle is of such character that a man could not forge it with a blacksmith's hammer on a blacksmith's anvil, or not?

Supposing a man would say to you that the Bible was written by man, that God had nothing to do with it except that He made the men who made the Book. With this great proposition as a starting point, you begin to read. You do not read carelessly, thoughtlessly, but carefully and with meditation. You take up the historic books, you pass through the books of devotion, you consider the books

of prophecy, you study the biographies, you take up the letters and finally you end with those two wonderful chapters, the twenty-first and twenty-second of Revelation. You determine as well as you can the times and the places where these books were written, the persons by whom they were written. You examine the effects which they have produced on the lives of individuals in homes, in communities, in nations. You do not raise any question of the miraculous, you deal only with obvious facts. When you have completed a study of this sort, what have you a right to say? Can you say, I know this Book to be the Word of God? Can you say, I know this Book to be the work of man? Can you say I know this Book to be in part divine and in part human? Can you know anything about it or are you shut up to doubts, to beliefs, to thinkings? I am well aware of the fact that different minds are impressed differently by the same occurrences. But while this is true it is also true that all minds are subject to certain general laws. No sane man can believe that a baby three years old takes a building five hundred feet long in his hand and throws it a hundred yards. It makes no difference who tells him that it is true. He not only

does not believe it; he says that it is a lie. And he is quite right, it would be a lie. There is no advantage in trifling with statements like this.

Suppose, now, we think of the life of Jesus Christ as prophesied and revealed in the Word of God. Suppose some man to tell us that He was merely a human being. Or suppose one to do as some have done and tell us that there never was such a Person at all, that He is the result of the myth-forming tendency in the human race. Yet here are the facts. Throughout the civilized world the cross of Jesus Christ is lifted into the air from noble cathedrals, worn on golden chains about the necks of beautiful women, housed in many books. Consider the transformations of character which are continually resulting in missions, in homes, in churches, and will you say, I do not believe you are right, or will you say, I know that you are wrong? Napoleon is not generally considered to have been especially fanatical on the subject of Christian faith, but even he said, "I know men and I know that Jesus Christ was not a man." I do not believe that any reasonably intelligent and fairly honest man can consider candidly the internal and external evidences for the divine

character of the Bible without coming to the conclusion that a human origin for such a Book is absolutely impossible. I believe that any such person, having candidly considered the facts in the case, will not only feel that he may say "I know" but that as a reasonable being he must say it. If this is true, we who hold "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" have a grave duty to perform. Let the prophets who have dreams tell them, but let us who have the Word of God speak it faithfully. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY INSPIRATION?

One of the remarkable facts connected with Biblical criticism is that a certain class of persons seem to delight in using words with meanings absolutely foreign to those which they originally bore. Is Jesus Christ divine? "Certainly He is divine. All men are divine. You are divine." So this great word which used to imply Godhead is dwarfed so that it may mean a drunken pedlar or a dishonest politician. "Divine? Certainly. Of course Jesus is divine. All men are divine."

Just so respecting the Word of God. When in the olden time men said that the Bible was God-breathed they meant what they said, that God by supernatural methods communicated His will to men and that the result of this communication was the Book which we have in our hands. This, however, is past and now men say, "The Bible inspired? Certainly. Longfellow is inspired. Lowell is inspired. All good writings are inspired. So the

Bible is inspired." To be sure this is not at all what the word "inspiration" used to mean. But without any definition or explanation the moderns rob this old word of all that it used to mean. I will not characterize the moral attitude of such writers harshly. I content myself with saying that such a method of dealing with literature is not considered fairly honest among business men.

The word "evolution" has been subject to the same unfortunate treatment. Originally this word signified a definite process. It meant that all life originated in primitive cells and that without divine interposition this primitive life differentiated itself into the forms of vegetable and animal life which exist on the globe. The simpler species by these processes of natural selection, the survival of the fittest, etc., became more complex and thus life without supervision or supernatural power has come to be what it is. Man is the summit of the ascending series of animal lives so far as his body is concerned. Some insistent and courageous persons conclude that the soul was subject to like processes, that it came little by little to be what it is. Not by divine creative act but by an evolution, primitive sensations coming at last to be memory,

imagination, reverence, hope, fear, etc., etc. Of course this is only a partial account of the matter, for the question that must arise is, Where did this original cell life come from? and here the evolutionists differ. Some believe in spontaneous generation and try to get other people to believe that life without creative power came to be from certain physical elements as carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and the like. Others declared that God must have started the process and implanted in the primitive cells the law by which they came to be the flora and the fauna of the world. This is no place nor is there time to discuss the subject of evolution.

I wish to remind my reader, however, that the word "evolution" has now come to have for many men a totally different significance from that which it originally possessed. To many persons at the present time evolution means simply the progress of an individual from infancy to maturity, the germination of human life, ending in the full man, the germination of the egg, producing the chick or the bird, the germination of the seed from the time the brown coat is softened and warmed until the time when the tree or the plant lifts itself into the sky, an object of beauty. This

is said to be an evolution, and persons are told that everybody believes in evolution, as indeed of course everybody does, if this is what is meant by the word. It is extremely difficult now to find in a Christian newspaper or a book written by a Christian evolutionist clear writing as to definition, but persons who wish to be considered scholarly talk about evolution as one of the assured results of scientific research and at the same time do not take pains to tell us what they mean by the word which they use. This is an *apparent* dishonesty. I do not wish to say that it *is* dishonest for I think that in many cases the trouble is ignorance and carelessness rather than intentional deceit. But certainly a man who uses a word like evolution ought to know what he means by it and his readers and hearers also ought to know, and for them to say evolution means progress from infancy to maturity when the word itself means a progress from species to species without divine power interfering, is not a straightforward line of action. I have no quarrel with a man who says what he means, who means what he says, and is clear in his utterances, but cuttlefish-dealing with subjects like these is entirely out of order

and ought not to be practiced or tolerated by intelligent or honest men.

What the Word "Inspiration" Means.

Certainly for many years it meant a divine force acting upon the human mind so that the person inspired did not speak or act according to his own knowledge, wisdom or will, but acted or spoke according to the knowledge, wisdom and will of God. In those days the Bible was said to be inspired. No one had any difficulty in knowing what was intended by this statement. The persons who used it believed that God communicated His will to men and caused men to write or speak His will to other men, so that in the books of the Bible we have not a record of man's thoughts, but a record of God's thinking; that we have not in these marvelous books some lines of action laid down which man approved or thought necessary, but those which God willed, for which He held man accountable and that He rewarded or punished according as man gave attention to what He said, or failed to do so.

That there is the inspiration of illumination, when truths which are already known are caused to shine in a clearer light; that there

is the inspiration of suggestion, when truths which are not apprehensible from human sources are directly communicated by the divine; that there is the inspiration of words, when the Spirit of God directs men not merely as to the thoughts which they should utter, but as to the words in which those thoughts are to be clothed. All of these shades of meaning are admitted, and thoughtful persons understand precisely what men intend by what they say. But what does the word inspiration mean when we are told that "all men are inspired; that Longfellow was inspired, that Lowell was inspired, that Shakespeare was inspired, that you are inspired," etc., etc.? What does this mean? Simply a big nothing. If inspiration were cut down to these dimensions nobody need speak of the inspiration of the Bible. They might as well speak of the inspiration of an arithmetic or a spelling-book or a dictionary.

Respecting this subject let me confess my faith and let me give such reasons for it as I can and let me urge my fellow men to do the same. Then if we do not agree we shall at least understand one another. If we will it so, at least we can all be honest. I believe the word inspiration to mean what the fathers

intended when they used that word. I believe that it signifies a divine supernatural communication from God to man and that persons who are inspired are inspired for particular tasks. Bezaleel and Aholiab were inspired to do work on the tabernacle; the writers of the Bible were inspired to give the law, the history, devotions and biographies which will give life eternal to men who pay attention to them. God inspires men to interpret and expound the Scriptures, but that He inspires men to increase the body of the Scriptures I do not believe, nor will I believe it until some one of the prophets of our time can offer his credentials. When our modern, inspired people will live as the old, inspired folk did, will write as they did, will produce the results that they did, I will believe them to be inspired also, but until then I shall not believe them to be inspired.

I believe the Bible to be thus inspired because of all the proofs by which thoughtful people are surrounded. I believe the miracles recorded in the Bible to have been wrought. I believe the prophecies to have been largely fulfilled and to be yet fulfilling. I believe the moral teaching of the Bible to be so lofty and sublime that no man can really know what it

is without admitting to himself, if not to others, the impossibility that such teaching should ever have originated among sinful men. I believe the history of the Bible when really known, to be true. I believe the scientific statements of the Bible to be accurate, and because of moral tone, miraculous information, prophetic information and the wonderful results in human character and society produced by this Book, I believe it to have been inspired. I think it absurd to the verge of insanity for anyone to hold that such a Book, working such transformations, could have originated anywhere short of the throne of God. I wish that my fellow students of the Bible would do as I am seeking to do. I wish they would tell us what they really understand the Bible to be. I wish they would write brief statements on my subject, "Who Wrote the Bible?" If they believe that man wrote it, I wish they would say so. If they believe that men wrote it in part but not in whole, I wish they would tell us what portion of it they believe to be human and what portion of it they believe to be divine. And I wish they would tell us in plain language why they believe what they believe. I profess to be a free seeker after truth. I do not believe that I am in any

way wedded to the past. I will just as freely believe and teach one thing about the Bible as another, provided there is evidence and I can know that it is true. I believe I am in a state of mind where I can listen patiently and candidly to any man who has a real faith which he is able to express in fairly good English and which seems to him important. But really we ought to have done with the sucking of eggs, with taking out from words, which have clearly established meanings, these meanings, and causing them to signify something else without telling us what they now believe the old word to signify and why they believe what they believe.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

This English word is derived from the Latin word *miraculum,* which means simply a wonder. It is obvious that miracles will vary with the character and training of the people among whom they are said to be wrought. What would be a wonder to one man will not be a wonder to another man who has a different training. So much we set down as a first remark.

In the second place, there are certain events which so far vary from the ordinary operations of nature that they are properly called miracles and would be so recognized by all persons who were acquainted with them. Take for example the raising of a dead man to life. It is the rule that when the body of a man is dead it decays. It is not according to human experience that dead bodies are reanimated. If an event of this kind should occur, it would be a *miraculum,* a wonder, a miracle. All people would call it so unless they were possessed by a desire to be peculiar.

Supposing a person to be subject to a serious disease like leprosy or a raging fever, and suppose another to come into the presence of the sick man and by a touch and a word cause him to be well. This again would be a miracle, a *miraculum,* a wonder. Ordinarily when there are diseases of this kind, remedies are used and time is an element in the case. If without any means employed and without any time allowed to pass, the leper is cleansed so that his skin becomes fair and smooth, the fevered man becomes healed so that his temperature goes to normal and he is able to attend to his work, we have here a case of the miraculous.

If a man were swallowed by a great fish, he would be in danger of suffocation and would be instantly attacked by the gastric juice. The rule would be that in a few moments he would become unconscious and in a short time he would be dead. If it should be found that in a certain instance a man swallowed by a great fish had lived for a period of three days, that he had been sufficiently conscious to pray while in the fish and that thereafter he had been thrown out upon the land and had gone about his work, it would be clear that we have here a series of events, not according to nature, but wonders, mir-

acles, *miracula*. The age in which we live, a pleasure-loving age, an age of great scientific attainment, an age of consequent self-conceit, does not like to admit the supernatural. One who examines the objections to the Bible will find the objection to the supernatural lying at the foundation of pretty much all that is said on the subject. As the "Reign of Law" becomes manifest, the record of events which we are not able to harmonize with known law becomes questioned. I desire, therefore, to have you spend a little time on the general subject of miracles, laying thus a foundation for a special examination of the miracles of the Bible, which, if God permit, may follow. And first I wish to remind my reader that so far as the possibility of real miracles is concerned the question is as to the existence and power and will of God.

Professed atheists in our time are comparatively few. When I was a boy there were many of these people, but at the present time those who are atheists call themselves agnostics, that is, they do not deny the existence of God but they say they do not know whether He exists or not. When, however, men deny the possibility of miracles, they are occupying distinctly atheistic ground. That God has

created the universe and governs it by general laws is unquestionably true. This is a question of fact which is determined by the observation of all men. But the fact that the usual administration of God is by general laws is no proof that God does not at times interfere with the ordinary progress of events and performs miracles. No man who is really in his right mind would deny that a Being who could create the universe could modify its actions if He pleased. One of our old hymns used to say:

"He can create and He destroy."

Surely if He can create, He might destroy.

If God were man, then the universe might be a Frankenstein and He might find it impossible to control the system which He had set in motion; but it is not the belief of theists that God is man. The poem says:

"Right is right and God is God,
And right the day must win."

Of course God is God and, therefore, having created the universe, He can control it. If He chooses to modify its ordinary activities in peculiar ways, that is easy. No man who believes

in the existence of God can for an instant doubt the possibility of the miracle.

He Might, but Will He?

That will depend on the reasons in the case. If there should be a sufficient reason, of course God, Who can without the slightest difficulty work any sort of miracles that He chooses, will work one or two or ten. There is no limit to be assigned to His power except the limit of reason. God will not do foolish things, but whatever is necessary He will do. This is absolutely clear. We must also remember that the necessity of the miracle is to be determined not by man but by God. We might think the raising of Lazarus would be entirely an unnecessary event but the fact that we so think would not be decisive. Perhaps God did see reasons for such a transaction. We are not to set bounds and give laws to the Ruler of the universe. Undoubtedly some men would be glad to do this. Beyond doubt some men think themselves quite competent to do this. Nevertheless the fact remains that God does not take advice of men as to the management of the universe. If He should wait for a vote before He sent a rain storm or a month of sunny weather, it would

be amusing to see how the world would get on; and just so regarding the unusual acts which He performs in the management of the world. He is governed by His own judgment, not by man's ignorance, and men who are not willing that God should manage the world may criticize Him if they desire and may unsettle His throne if they are able. But Christian people admit that God can work miracles, that He will work miracles if they are necessary, and that He will be the judge as to their necessity and will not take advice of men.

I am far from assuming that many of the acts of God do not seem entirely reasonable to thoughtful men. I believe that all of them do when men will take time and will consider the facts in the case. Let us spend a moment on Jonah. What was the situation? A great city of possibly a million of inhabitants was rotting to pieces from its sin. God ordered a certain prophet to go and warn the city that it might repent and that judgment might be averted. "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed." That is if it will not repent, if it continues in sin. This is clearly the teaching. Jonah was afraid to go and ran away, as many a preacher, teacher, Christian, has

done since. The probability is that scores if not hundreds of people will read these words who are at the time they read them doing just what Jonah did, that is, running away from disagreeable duties. Still God's purposes of mercy for the city continued and He arrested the prophet on his runaway trip; arrested him in a miraculous manner, that is, caused him to be swallowed by a fish, and in place of being smothered and digested by the fish, caused him to live, to be conscious, to pray and finally to be delivered. Having this tremendous lesson thus taught, God said to him, "Go preach to Nineveh the preaching that I bid thee." This time he went, and day after day in that great wicked city he warned the people of impending judgment. They heard and, more sensible than some men of our time, they were afraid. The king himself was afraid. He put on emblems of mourning and made proclamation that his people should turn from their sins, if possibly the penalties deserved might be averted. God saw that the city repented and He spared it. There were one hundred and twenty thousand children in it who had not yet come to the age of moral accountability. There were great numbers of cattle in the city that had done no evil, yet

which would suffer if a judgment like that of Sodom and Gomorrah should fall upon it. What was the reason that the people listened to the preaching of Jonah? Is it probable that just escaping from his living doom he failed to tell the people his experience? Is it probable that the sailors who had seen him and known of the storm and his being cast into the sea said nothing on the subject? Is it not very probable that the reason why his message was attended to and the city was saved was because he could say to the people, I was a coward. I tried to avoid delivering this message to you. I ran away, but God dealt with me. Three days I was in the belly of a great fish, and I prayed to God. There He pardoned me and now I am here to tell you that if you repent God may pardon you and if you do not repent you will be destroyed?

Some of my readers may think this was entirely insufficient as a reason for the miracle which is alleged. To me it seems entirely sufficient. It was just as easy for God to keep Jonah alive in the belly of a fish as to keep him alive in the Waldorf-Astoria, and Jonah would have no more power to keep himself alive in that great hotel than he had in the fish's belly. Many a man and woman with un-

limited means and with a hearty disposition to live have died in luxurious hotels. Probably many more people have died in such places than ever died in fishes. How many people in that great city which repented at the preaching of Jonah lived thereafter more humble and worthy lives? We do not know, but we know that for the time at least there was a profound impression produced and a great change came about. Of this we are certain. Now my wise friend who knows how God ought to run the universe and who apparently wishes God would take counsel with him from time to time respecting it, may think this whole transaction silly and unimportant. I have myself in meetings of ministers heard jokes regarding this event in this prophet's life, but I have never been able to laugh at the funny things which these brethren have said. To me it seems a very wonderful exhibition of divine power. I am glad that God cared enough about those poor people in Nineveh to warn them. Sometimes I wish He would in some similar fashion warn the ignorant, suffering people in Chicago or New York. If He did, husbands would be better men and wives would have an easier time. The jails would not be so full. The poorhouses would

not be so full. The insane asylums would not be so full. While I admit that we do not need any more teaching than we have, and while I do not blame God for not working more miracles than He does, when I see the misery which men bring upon themselves, I really wish sometimes we might have miracles like this to startle a self-complacent, worldly, licentious, untruthful people into at least a momentary sanity.

He Might, but Did He?

Thus far we have settled two questions, if my readers have followed me, as I trust they have. First, it is a perfectly simple thing for God to work miracles. It is just as easy for Him to work miracles as it is for us not to work them. In the second place, God will work miracles if they are necessary and of their necessity He will be the judge. Perhaps we can see that there was a sufficient reason for all the miracles which He wrought. It seems to me that I can see the reason for the miracles, but no matter whether the reasons seem sufficient to my friends or not, God will be the judge as to the reasons, and man will do wisely to let Him manage His own affairs. They will be compelled to do so in the

end. It is just as well to do it pleasantly and without making foolish objections. But the fact that God can work miracles and that He will work miracles if He thinks wise does not prove that He has worked them. Here we come into the region of testimony. We pass out from the region of pure reason to the region of human affirmation. The evidence for miracles comes to us through men. These men are not the authors of the evidence. God is the author and He has told the men to record it. It is fair to raise a question as to the evidence in the case. Take, for example, the miracles connected with the departure from Egypt. God could have wrought them all if they were necessary. If they were necessary God would have wrought them all. It is declared that He did work them all. Is the evidence sufficient? Take the miracles connected with the lives of the prophets Elijah, Elisha, and the rest. God could have wrought these miracles. It was nothing for Him to kill fifty or one hundred men if they needed to be killed and He wished to do it. Is it true that He did kill one hundred men who came to drag away one of His prophets to be checked up by a worthless,

bloody king? It is declared that He did. Is the evidence sufficient?

Take the miracles connected with the launching of the Christian church, the miracles ascribed to our Lord and His apostles. All sane persons admit that they are entirely possible. The question is whether or not they actually occurred and this is a question of testimony. Is the evidence sufficient? If so, we are bound to believe them; if not, we are bound to hold them in doubt or reject them as the case may be.

It is obvious that an extended examination of a large number of miracles is impossible in a work having the purpose which lies below this one. I must content myself with a few instances. Let us take the exodus from Egypt. Is there reason for believing the miracles which are alleged at that time to have been wrought? If there is, if the evidence is sufficient, then we are bound to accept the record, and if the evidence is not sufficient, we may hold them in doubt or may reject them as the case may be.

The Wide View.

Let us look at the case as a whole for a moment and then examine one in particular,

in detail. What was the situation? Here was a race of slaves in bondage to a desperately wicked and cruel king and people. This nation of slaves had been chosen of God to occupy a distinguished place in human history. God wished them to be free, not only because He wishes all people to be free, though that is true, but because these were His chosen people and were assigned to a particular task and they must be free if they were to accomplish it. Is it probable that the bloody ruler of this enslaved nation would let them go without some exhibition of supernatural power? Has it been the custom of kings and luxurious, lazy, worthless people to dismiss slaves for light and trifling reasons? Did we free our slaves in this manner?

I was born in the time when the discussion of American slavery was ripening for war. I lived through the entire struggle which ended in nationalizing freedom. I remember very vividly the occurrences of those days. I was astounded, as were Northern people in general, at the defeats which came to the arms of the Union. Those defeats continued until our President issued the Proclamation of Emancipation, and on the day when that Proclamation was issued the tide turned. Of course some

wise men may say that if we had continued partners in the enslaving of the negro race, the tide would have turned just as it did. I have many times been compelled to say that some of my wise friends can tell what would have happened if what did occur had not taken place. I am myself not so wise. I know some of the things which occur and sometimes I think I can see the reasons for them, but I never can tell what would have taken place if the events which have occurred had failed. So I repeat again—we never triumphed in any large way in the war for the Union until our rulers had declared their purpose to free the slaves. Then we did triumph, and from that time the fate of the rebellion was sealed. Were Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the same condition? I am inclined to think they were, and if God had not wrought miracles terrifying and confusing them, they would never have consented to let His people go. Of course some of my wise friends may say, Why did not God bring about that in some other way? For example, why did He not kill the people by a plague? This would have been easy. He could have done this if He desired, but I must again decline to spend time in considering what might have

been. I set before myself the humbler task of considering what is and has been, and I repeat that so far as I can see the only way to secure the voluntary dismissal of slaves on the part of Egypt was to bring about such a series of events as the Word of God records. This would make all plain. Nothing short of this, it seems to me, would have accomplished the end desired.

Seven Days of Hard Tack.

If the people of the United States should this year decide to eat unleavened bread, bread made with flour, water and salt without leaven of any kind, and to keep this up for a period of seven days and to make this an annual occasion and should continue to do so for twenty-five or fifty years, I think any reasonable person would ask for an explanation. Why should a nation decide to eat hard tack once a year for seven days for a period of twenty-five or fifty years? I think the question would be a fair one and that every reasonable student would say that some reason there must have been.

Now the Jews have been eating hard tack every year for a period of seven days for about three thousand years. Scattered as they

are throughout the lands of the earth everywhere they have had these seven days of unleavened bread. When you ask them why they eat this unleavened bread every year, they say that it is because when their fathers were coming out of Egypt about fourteen hundred years before Christ they came out by night in haste and that for a time they had to use bread of this kind, and they declare that God taught them to keep up this fast of unleavened bread, this seven days of hard tack, in order that they might not forget the great events through which they passed during those days of deliverance. Now a national custom like this is a tremendous monument. The base of this monument is the ends of the earth. Wherever you find a Jewish family living according to Jewish law, you find the Passover feast, the days of unleavened bread. If the explanation alleged is not the true one, what explanation will our wise men substitute? The fact is that the institutions of any nation are the most tremendous comment upon its history. The Jews are no exception to this universal rule. Every synagogue in the world is today bearing testimony to the miracles wrought in Egypt. It was a sufficient reason for them. God was well able to cause them.

The Bible says He did cause them. No rational person has any reason to doubt this testimony of the Word of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

IS THE AGE OF MIRACLES PAST?

I do not know how many times in my life I have heard men and women, sometimes I am sorry to say, ministers who are called to preach the Word, make the remark above indicated. When I hear people say this, I like to ask them how they know the age of miracles is past. The Bible does not say that the age of miracles ever will be past. In fact there are intimations that the age of miracles will not pass. The commission of the disciples as they went out to organize the church, to preach the Gospel of the King, seemed to indicate the possibility of miracles continuing. Of course I know that the last chapter of Mark is questioned, but apart from that there are intimations of the continuance of the supernatural power in the church. Take for example the conversion of sinners. Which is the greater miracle, to reanimate a dead body or to reanimate a dead soul? We do not call conversion a miracle because we see it so frequently, but is it therefore not fairly con-

sidered one? I am not speaking of the results of Christian living which come to well-bred people who have never been in open sin, of the quiet coming into faith of the people who have no stormy passions and who have never really felt the grip of evil spirits on their souls. I am talking about the other sort of folks who have to "resist to blood, striving against sin," people assailed by the demons of licentiousness, of drink, of gambling, of drugs or of idleness. Whether my readers have ever battled with these evil spirits or not, there are plenty of people who have, and I think that one who knows the frightful power which these legions of darkness possess will believe that to be saved and kept from uncleanness so that the soul may feel white in the presence of God is quite as much a work of supernatural power as that of quickening dead eyes so that they can see, of dead ears so that they can hear, of dead tongues so that they can speak, or of a dead body so that it might rise up and go its way.

I know, however, that those who have not experienced the frightful power of the demons will be unable to comprehend this argument. All those who have had this test and victory will know precisely what I am talking

about and I think they will, most of them, agree with me in opinion. I do not, however, intend to beg the question nor to say that people who cannot appreciate this argument have not a right to an answer to their question, Is the age of miracles ended? I remind them, however, that in the days of our Lord precisely the same difficulty occurred. There were folks who could not understand about the forgiveness of sin but who could realize what it meant to see a paralytic take up his bed and go home, and Jesus says expressly on one occasion that He worked this physical miracle that they might know that He had power to work the spiritual wonder. "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy" (Mark 2:10). This shows that at that time men thought it a great miracle to see a palsied man walking away with his bed on his shoulder but thought it to be not at all a sure thing if Jesus said to a poor, sin-smitten soul, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and Jesus undertook to meet their difficulty. He said, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the sick of the palsy." He wrought the outward miracle which the poor blinded people

about Him could see and understand, that they might believe that the greater miracle was wrought.

Is the Age of Miracles Past?

I put the question again because I wish all my readers to know that I intend to deal honestly with it, and while everything which I have said on the subject is true and weighty, I will not, even to those who cannot comprehend it, seem to avoid the issue.

Does God in our day interfere with what might be called His ordinary methods of administration for the purpose of relieving the suffering, removing perplexity or accomplishing any other good end for His people? This is the question. Let me now ask you to read again chapter seven throughout and to question whether there is anything in it which you cannot see to be surely true. If you agree that what is written in the last chapter is a statement of fact, then you will admit that God can work miracles if He chooses, that God will work miracles if it is best, that of their necessity He will be the judge and that the question whether or not He has thus interfered for the help of His children is a question of fact to be determined by testimony.

All the rules of evidence, of course, are to be observed. The character of the witness, his competence, anything which is fairly asked for in a court of justice, may reasonably be required here. The testimony of hysterical, half-crazed individuals of course is to be rejected, or, if it is received at all, received because of corroboration and not because of the character of the witness.

If, for example, a man or a woman says that body and mind having been destroyed by narcotic stimulants, he or she on a certain occasion had dealings with God; that in the course of the transaction God touched his or her body, that the appetite which had been a cruel tyrant was suddenly broken, that the nerves which had been frazzled and worn were still and quiet, and that for a term of years, say two years, or five, or ten, or forty, the former victim had been clothed and in his or her right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus, rejoicing in His saving and keeping power. Suppose half a dozen or a dozen friends, one or two physicians, perhaps a jail-keeper or two, declare themselves to have know this person, to have been acquainted with him or her during the period of the evil demon's control, to have known the person directly after he or

she had dealings with God on the subject; supposing that these people testified that to outward appearance the change which is alleged by the individual actually took place, that the man or woman who had been unable to do without the gratification of base appetites had suddenly become a self-controlled, happy person. Suppose they declare that there seemed to be physical changes, that the eyes became clear and quiet, that the movements were regular and rational, that labor which had been impossible for years was faithfully and efficiently performed, so that a person who had been a helpless victim, nay, a menace to society, had come to be a useful and worthy member of it. On what ground is this testimony to be rejected? If these people should be sworn in court and should declare that they had seen and known certain events to take place that they knew personally had occurred, their testimony would be accepted. Of course there is no rational reason for rejecting the testimony of these persons in regard to the character and deliverance of the individual who is furnishing testimony to the honor of Jesus. The question is as to its miraculous character. There is no reasonable basis for rejecting the

testimony in itself. Is this a miracle or not? If it is a miracle, certainly the age of miracles is not past, for there are scores, yes, hundreds of men and women, who will furnish testimony substantially like the above, and there are hundreds and thousands of people who will corroborate what they say. If this story were found in the New Testament, the unbeliever would question it. He would say that it required time to get the victory over evil passions, that nerves which had been destroyed through years of abuse could not be in a moment made normal, that wills which had been enfeebled by years of evil living could not be in an instant restored to strength and vigor. All people would admit that God's ordinary method is to work more slowly than in the ways supposed, but all reasonable people would also admit that if the evidence was sufficient for an exception to the rule it ought to be received, and that the age of miracles, if you call this a miracle, is not past.

Take the Case of Sickness.

Let a man or woman tell us that he or she had for years been suffering under consumption, that a dozen physicians have declared that one lung is entirely gone and that the

other lung is so seriously affected that there is reason to anticipate death at any time, that there is no reason to anticipate a recovery to health and strength. Suppose these physicians are living men whose testimony is secured and they confirm what the sick man says. Suppose this man to go forward and relate that on a certain occasion God spoke to him, it matters not how, in some way, through a sermon, through a portion of the Bible, in the prayer of a friend—the manner is immaterial. He says that whereas he had been coughing, had had hectic flushes in his cheeks, had had sharp pains passing through his lung or lungs, had been throwing off large quantities of sputum indescribably foul and offensive, and supposing that he proceeds further to say that on this occasion when God spoke to him and he spoke back to God, God said to him, If I make you well, what will you do? And supposing he said he promised Him that he would give without reservation to His service the new life that He should bestow. Supposing he says that God said to him, "Will you make your boast of Me, will you tell people what I have done, and will you encourage other afflicted folk to come to Me for help"; and he said, "Lord, I will." Suppose he pro-

ceeds to say that a strange and wonderful power seemed to affect his body, that something seemed to pass over him, through him, burning up waste tissues, removing difficulties of one kind and another and that in an hour he was healed. Suppose he says that his cough passed away, not gradually, little by little, but at once. Supposing he tells you that he began to breathe deeply with comfort and satisfaction. Supposing he says that night sweats passed, that his cheeks became normal in color, that his strength returned so that he could walk or run or labor without difficulty; and supposing that the doctors who testified that he had been a hopeless consumptive testified that they had seen him since this alleged recovery and that, so far as they know, what he says is true. Suppose his friends, his wife or children or brothers or sisters do the same. On what ground is this testimony to be rejected, allowing that the people are persons of good character whose testimony would be accepted in a court of justice? I do not see how this testimony can be rejected by rational, fair-minded persons, and if it is accepted, what shall we say to the question, Is the age of miracles past? Certainly if a case of this kind were recorded in the

New Testament, people would say that it was miraculous. Objectors to the supernatural would say that they did not believe it to be true. What will they say when the person stands before them with witnesses to prove that what he has said is so?

I remember when Jenny Smith stood on our platform at the college for an hour and told the students and teachers assembled how for sixteen years she had been unable to walk or sit erect. She told them that over thirty physicians diagnosed her case and declared that she was to be a life-long invalid, that she had nothing to do but suffer. She told us how in those days she was carried on a cot from church to church, from conference to conference, bearing testimony as an invalid to the sustaining grace of God. She told us that in the city of Philadelphia in a hospital her sister, sixteen years of age, was with her who had never seen her sit erect or stand upon her feet. She sent out invitations to friends to come and pray with her for her recovery. She told us how after the invitations had been sent to the office she felt she had been presumptuous, that it was not God's will to make her well, and sent her sister to the office to see if the letters had gone that she might recall

them if they were yet at the office. The letters had gone and her friends came, about twenty of them. They prayed with her and for her and she lay still on the cot helpless as she had been for sixteen years. She told us how at this time a minister rose, saying that he had another engagement and must be excused, and she said, "That is quite right, brother, I do not wish to keep you or anyone who wants to go; but if any of you can tarry with me I should be glad to have you do so, for I believe it is God's purpose to heal me tonight." She said that he came and stood by her cot and said to her, "Sister Jenny, you are rebelling against God. You have preached better sermons from this sick bed and greater sermons than we ministers are able to preach from our pulpits; you ought to be happy to go on thus serving and rejoicing in God." She said she replied to him, "Brother, you do not understand me at all. There were years when I did rebel against the providence of God, when I wanted to be well so greatly that it seemed I would like to be well even if God did not wish it. But that is all passed. I am just as willing to die as live, and I am as willing to live sick as well. I am absolutely contented with whatever God wills, but I be-

lieve it is His purpose to heal me tonight. You go on about your work and let all the rest go who wish to go, but if any can tarry I shall be glad of their help." She said about one-half the number present went away, the other half remaining; that they sat there quietly, occasionally repeating a verse of Scripture, singing in soft tones a verse of a hymn, one and another offering prayer. She said that about eleven o'clock she felt power coming into her back and arms, and putting her hands down on the sides of her cot, she rose to a sitting position. Her physician, one of those who had remained with her, ran to her, and lowering the foot-board of her cot, brought her feet near the floor. She rose and, unaided, walked across the room to a chair and sat down praising God. Her sister went to the heater and took a bowl of milk which had been warming for her and brought it to her, which she drank with great satisfaction. After a time she walked, still unaided, back to the cot and slept through the night. On the morrow she arose, was dressed and began to walk about the world to which she had been so largely dead for sixteen years. I suppose there must have been a hundred thousand people at least who had seen her carried about on her cot, seen

her loaded into express or baggage cars year after year, as she did all her traveling in that way. I am repeating the story from memory and I do not profess to be accurate in every detail, but the substance of her narrative is as recorded. I think she still lives, and if so, she can correct any failure of memory caused by the lapse of time. The substance is as she gave it and the witnesses are not numbered by ones and twos but by hundreds and thousands.

If my reader had found this story in the book of Matthew or John, he would have at once said, Here is a miracle wrought by the power of Jesus, and would have thanked God Who had given such power to man. The unbeliever would have said it was all a lie, the writer became enthusiastic and wrote that he saw what he did not see, or in some way or other would have explained *away* a fact which may be received and believed, but which does not require to be explained. This is not something which happened in the year one or in the year thirty or in the year fifty. It is an event of our own time and it is as well substantiated as thousands of cases which are decided in our courts every year. If one objects to Bible miracles, why should he not object to this one

which is not a Bible miracle but a modern miracle wrought by the same power which healed and saved so many years ago?

In my little book on "Getting Things from God" I have spoken of my friend who told his story in the Eighth Avenue Mission, New York. I never saw him anywhere except in the mission, and I have never confirmed his story by the testimony of other witnesses, but he seemed to be an absolutely truthful man. My impression is that his testimony to matters of fact would have been accepted in any court in the world. Those who have read "Getting Things from God" will remember how his physician in the hospital said he was dead, how his wife insisted that she had had a promise from God that he should be saved, and that he could not die until this promise was fulfilled. You will remember that the doctor replied, "I do not know anything about that but I know he is dead. I am very sorry for you but he is dead." He summoned physicians to the number of seven, all saying that he was dead, and then withdrew leaving her on her knees by the side of the cot while the screen which they put between the living and the dead in those wards was drawn about them. He said that his wife asked for a pil-

low because the floor hurt her knees; that the nurse brought her one and that she remained kneeling on that pillow by the side of his cot thirteen hours; that then he opened his eyes and she said to him, "My dear, what do you want?" And he replied, "I want to go home." And she said, "You shall go home." The doctors who had declared him to be a corpse made a great objection. They said it was murder for her to take a man in his condition away from the hospital, but she said, "You all said he was dead. I do not see how you can kill a dead man. I am going to take him home." This man sat by my side for perhaps an hour. When he told this story he was standing within six or eight feet of me. What would my friend who objects to the supernatural events recorded in the Old Testament or in the New Testament say if he had found this story there? Of course he would have explained it—away. He would have said there was some reason for believing that the man was not dead, that life was suspended for a bit, but that all the while he was alive and liable to get up and go about his work. I do not say that the man was dead. It was the seven doctors who said that. I say that he was apparently dead, that the doctors de-

clared he was dead, that his wife held on to the promises of God, and that as she prayed God gave him power and she took him home. When he was lying on the cot in the hospital he said he weighed about one hundred pounds. That night as he was talking in the Eighth Avenue Mission he said he weighed two hundred and forty-six pounds. He looked the part. He was an engineer on the Pennsylvania Railroad, running, he said, a fast line train from Harrisburg to Philadelphia. Is the age of miracles past? Certainly the age when God *can* work miracles is not past, nor is the age when He *will* work them, if there be sufficient reason, past. In every case of this kind the whole question is one of evidence. Nobody is required to believe without evidence. God never asks anybody to believe anything without a reason, but He does require men to believe what there is reason to believe.

In the same book of which I have spoken I mention God's dealings with me in regard to the raising up of the sick. I have seen it done repeatedly when physicians declared that there was nothing before the sick one but death. In one instance the friends had been brought home to see their mother die and had sat about for days waiting for her to

die. Her husband came over to my office to get me to pray for her, and I went, and she lived to bury that husband after some years.

I saw, as those who have read "Getting Things from God" will remember, a child with supposedly no chance for living. God raised up the child. He has been running about my yard lately. No one would have given a penny for his life that morning when we prayed for him as he lay on the pillow on the lap of a kind neighbor. I have mentioned a few instances, only a few. There are plenty more, which might be recorded, instances in home lands, instances in heathen lands, the healings of sick people and the casting out of demons. I will not say that God does not at times raise the dead even in our day. I have never known an instance which I considered unquestionable, but I have seen what came so near to it that to me there was little practical difference.

Why Not Oftener?

I have no doubt some good man will say, Well, if God can and will and does step outside the ordinary course of nature in our time, why does He not help other people? There are many people who would like to be helped.

Why does He not heal them, deliver them? And I answer that there were many people in the time of Christ who were not helped. There were many lepers in Israel at the time of Elisha the prophet, but only Naaman was healed. So far as we know Naaman was the only one who went to Elisha. Naaman came near losing his healing because when the prophet told him what to do he went away in a rage. If he had not happened to have a servant there who had some sense, he would have rotted to pieces as a leper. As it was, when he dipped in Jordan the seventh time his flesh came again to him like the flesh of a little child.

The trouble with people in our day is like the trouble with the people in that day. We are too smart, we are too full of the world, we are too much filled up with the thought of men. We do not ask what God has said, what God thinks or will or can do. We ask what people say, what people think, what people will do, and we ought to be ashamed. If we could get ashamed and could cease from our dishonoring unbelief, God could do a thousand things for us which He would like to do but which He now cannot do because of our unbelief. He does not offer prizes to lazi-

ness. He does not offer prizes to earthliness. His rewards are for those who can see His face, can hear His voice, and are willing to obey. For people like this the age of miracles never passes.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

The Holy Spirit says in I Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The same Spirit in Isaiah 9:6 says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The same Spirit says in Hebrews 1:8, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom." In these scriptures we have clearly set forth the dual nature of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Man Christ Jesus and He also was the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. I am going to speak of His testimony to the Bible.

Some years ago I was on the examining committee of what is now called a conference, when a young man was before us asking approbation as a preacher. He was from one

of our wealthy universities where there is a great affectation of learning, where there is really a great deal of learning, such as it is. I said to him in the examination, "If you believed that Jesus Christ actually said that Moses wrote of Him, and your professors should tell you that Moses never wrote anything of Jesus Christ, which would you believe?" He replied, "I suppose there are many sorts of information available at the present time which were not at command when our Lord was living." In other words he believed that a professor in one of our colleges or universities knew more about the writers of the Bible than the Lord Jesus Christ who came down from heaven to die for the sins of man. He was apparently a young man of high character. He had been a high school teacher at the salary of twelve hundred dollars a year. He was just leaving his work as a teacher to accept the pastorate of a little church where they were to pay him six hundred dollars per annum. As I looked upon him I loved him and I marveled at what he said. I did not blame him; I blamed his teachers; I blame them now. I believe if that entire institution could be sunk in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean it would be a vast bene-

fit to the kingdom of God and the sons of men.

Of course, to a person in this state of mind, it makes no difference what Jesus said or thought about the Bible. He believes that Jesus was ignorant and therefore he does not accept his testimony; but Christian people still believe that Jesus Christ knew at least as much as an ordinary professor, and they accept His testimony as decisive in regard to matters on which He spoke. I trust that there are very few among my readers who will have come into the unfortunate condition at which the young man had arrived, and I therefore mention to them the teaching of Jesus in regard to the Word of God, with the confident expectation that when they reflect upon what Jesus said respecting the Bible it will be the end of the controversy.

In the first place I remind you that the only Bible which Jesus ever saw was the Old Testament. I remind you that He never saw this in printed form; that possibly, yes, probably, He never saw it in collected form; that the sacred books in His day were in rolls. There was the roll of the prophet Isaiah, there was the roll of Moses, and from these priceless treasures He drank deep as a mere child. Fortu-

nately we know that the Old Testament which He possessed was substantially the one which we have in our hands today. About three hundred years before He was born this Old Testament had been made into Greek by learned men in the city of Alexandria, Egypt. Both these books, the Hebrew and the Greek, were accessible in His time. He knew about them. His wondering admirers said, "How doth this man know letters, never having learned?" (John 7:15). That is to say, He had never been a pupil in the schools, yet He learned letters so that in the synagogue at Capernaum he stood up to read and sat down to teach. This, I say, was the only Bible which He knew. The New Testament, which was to give clear revelation of that which the prophets had taught in symbol and type, was not begun until He had ended His mission on earth. We have therefore to consider His testimony as to the facts. What did He say about the Bible that He had? Did He say anything about the Bible that was to be? If He did speak of the New Testament, what did He say?

The Old Testament a Battle Ground.

It is well understood by all Bible students

that the Old Testament, which has for years been the football of these alleged scholars, was the Bible which our Lord had. When we hear Him speak about the Scriptures, we are to remember that He was talking about the Old Testament. They were the only Scriptures of which He had knowledge. If we can learn what He thought about them, how He treated them, we can learn how those who love Him and revere Him as the Saviour of the world will also think about and speak about the Old Testament in our day. Let us then reflect on a few facts relating to our Lord's relation to the Old Testament, to the Scriptures of His time. And first let us remember that He not only knew them but used them repeatedly. He quoted them to His disciples, He quoted them to His enemies, He quoted them to the Devil when he assailed Him in the wilderness of Judea. As we examine these quotations, it is apparent that Jesus Christ believed the Old Testament to be the Word of God, an authority for man. "It is written," "It is written," "It is written," He said to Satan, and at each thrust of this mighty sword Satan drew back. When He wished to modify the teaching of the Book, He modified it, not to make it less important,

but to make it more so. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, but I say unto you." Probably He was in most, if not all, instances speaking of the commentaries of the Word rather than of the Word itself; but no matter which was His purpose, He intensified and extended the law. He did not abrogate it, as He Himself said, "I did not come to destroy it but to fulfil it." And it was Jesus Himself who said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my Word shall not pass away." Whether our critical friends are right in their supposition that it will sometime pass away or not, they will have to admit that up to date it has not passed away, that up to this time it has fulfilled His word concerning it. Heaven and earth have not passed away. They will; but up to now the Word of Jesus has not passed away.

It should also be admitted that throughout His entire recorded teaching He never in any instance spoke of this Word slightingly or with contempt. An unfortunate man who was for years a professor in a theological seminary has recently written an essay entitled "Christianizing the Bible." When he was drawing a salary of three thousand dollars a year for professing to teach truths which he then

denied and which he still denies, people objecting to criticisms of him told what a beautiful character he was, how lovely he was in his home life, how delightful to his wife and children, and we had none of us any disposition to deny the truth of all these commendations. Unfortunately, however, his home relations were not the subject of criticism. He was criticized for professing to teach the Bible, for drawing a salary for doing so and then to the extent of his power breaking down the faith of the people in the Book which he was paid to teach. That was the point which was objected to. Respecting this matter, there was never any defense made so far as I know. No one who knew what he was teaching believed him to believe the Bible or to teach it, yet he drew his salary regularly to the last hour and went away with the price of his treason in his pocket.

There was never a word in the teaching of Jesus Christ from beginning to end which corresponded to this blasphemous phrase, "Christianizing the Bible." Our Lord did blame people for not obeying the Word, but He never blamed the Word for not teaching the people how to do. Once more I must remark that if people do not believe Jesus

Christ knew enough to form an intelligent opinion respecting the Bible, of course they will not value either His positive or negative testimony in its favor. But Christians must believe that, if Jesus Christ, knowing the Bible, knowing it from a child, using it habitually with all classes of people, both friends and foes, always spoke of it with respect and never criticized it as lacking in any particular, this is a most certain fact, and for a Christian it seems to me it is a decisive one.

Our Lord not only quoted the Bible and failed to criticize the Bible, but speaking in general terms He commended it to His disciples. "Search the scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). There is a question as to the translation of this verse, but there is no question as to the teaching "Search the scriptures." What scriptures? The writings of the Old Testament, to be sure. There were no other in His time. If these writings were full of scientific error, as men now blasphemously affirm, why should Jesus Christ, Who made the worlds, set people to studying this defective or false account of the creation which He Himself had made, this course of history

which he Himself had supervised? From every point of view it seems to me a man should either stop calling himself a Christian or should stop criticizing, in the present reckless and godless fashion, this Book which our Lord Jesus treated with such respect. From this He expounded the things that are written concerning Himself. He began with all the prophets to do this. Why cannot His professed followers be contented to do the same?

But What of the New Testament?

This is to us a portion of the Word of God, but we have no right to receive it without thought and examination any more than we have the Old Testament. Did Jesus say anything about the New Testament, and, if He did, what did He say? Over and again He reminded His disciples that He looked upon them as witnesses who were to bear testimony for Him to the world. He used that very expression. He said, "Ye are my witnesses." They were the men whom He called into the world to prove what sort of a person He was. It is obvious that their embarrassment would not be scantiness, but abundance of material. Walking with Him for years, listening to Him

by day and by night, how full their minds must have been of His character and teaching. They being human beings like us, there was reason to fear that when they should undertake to give their evidence either verbally or in writing they might omit the important and dwell upon the comparatively insignificant. How easy it would have been to have filled up the Gospels with accounts of His appearance, His height, His weight, the color of His hair and eyes, the way in which He walked and spoke. How wonderful the Gospels are, considered from the standpoint of simple description. Not a single word respecting these trifling things, not a comment on His most tremendous teaching—just the record. Day after day, hour after hour, set down for the teaching of coming ages. How did this happen? Jesus tells us how it happened. He says, "When the Holy Spirit is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Here we have the secret of New Testament writing. The Spirit of God was to bring to the remembrance of those witnesses the things that Jesus Christ had said. Not all the things that He had said or done, but

the things which were important to their testimony. "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." That is, all things which were essential to the work in hand. These witnesses, whom He thus specially qualified to give their testimony, began and continued until they finished their courses under this supernatural guidance.

A few years ago the scholars of two worlds collated on a translation of the Bible. When the New Testament had been concluded the books were eagerly awaited by Bible scholars on this side of the sea. At last the precious volume arrived in New York, and a great paper in Chicago paid for having that book telegraphed over that thousand miles, and by the time it was offered for sale in the streets of New York it was printed and sold by this newspaper in the streets of Chicago. This is in itself a wonderful testimony to the character of this wonderful Book. But if what has been said is true, if the Holy Spirit was the responsible Author, if He taught those men what they were to say, if He brought to their remembrance the things that Jesus Christ had said, then all is understandable. We are to add to this testimony of Jesus the

fact that these witnesses so empowered were themselves men filled with the Holy Spirit for their daily lives and work. They were miracle-workers, as we should expect men entrusted with such a high and holy office to be. I have not forgotten Mark and Luke, two men, not of apostolic grade, who became biographers of our Lord. But there is no reason to doubt the faith of the church in all ages until now that these men wrote under the direct supervision of the miracle-working apostles. Mark was the student of Peter and Luke the companion and friend of Paul, so that we have in the books which those two men wrote no exception to the general plan which is stated above. We accept the Old Testament on the authority of Jesus Christ. We accept the New Testament on the authority of Jesus Christ. He certified to the one after it was completed. He certified to the manner and means by which the other should be written. This is all a Christian needs. It is true that fulfilled prophecy, the testimony of miracles, the moral tone of the Bible, its effect among the nations, the wonderful way in which it has been preserved, all these are added evidences which go to show that the faith of the church in this wonderful Book is well

founded. Pelion is piled on Ossa. Mountains of proof are added to mountains of proof. The work is of such importance—such life and death importance to a sinful world, that God has not permitted any nook or corner where a reasonable doubt concerning this Book can creep in. It is a more sure word of prophecy, more sure than visions, more sure than voices from heaven, though visions and voices are not to be despised. But this Book is more certain than all, and upon it the Christian church has built her faith.

CHAPTER X.

DID THE PROPHETS FORETELL?

Years ago, in the city of New York, two lectures were placed in my hands, the work of a Hebrew Rabbi of that city. One of them was entitled, "Did Isaiah Prophesy Jesus?" In this lecture the Hebrew Rabbi undertook to show that Isaiah said nothing about Jesus. In place of speaking of Jesus, he said the prophet was talking about the suffering servant, and that this meant either the Hebrew people or some individual, at present unknown.

The second lecture was entitled, "Did the Other Prophets Prophesy Jesus?" He dealt with them in substantially the same fashion, saying that they said nothing about Jesus but talked about other persons.

This is only one movement in the attempt to show that prophets have not prophesied, that there has been no instance of foretelling future events in any clear and decisive manner. It is alleged that where the prophecies are somewhat indefinite, they were guesses; that where they are definite, they were writ-

ten after the event. In both instances the prophecy is denied.

The question whether or not the fact of the foretelling of future events can be clearly made out is an important one.

The Preaching Work of the Prophets.

It is admitted that the prophets were not exclusively occupied with the foretelling of future events. They were great preachers, men who loved their nation and who wept bitter tears as they saw her ruin approaching. They saw that the ruin was caused by sin and by sins, and they insisted that the nation must repent and turn from sin or she would be destroyed. From time to time they turned from the sight and sins of their own people to the cruelties and abominations of the nations around them, and they declared, respecting these neighbor nations—Moab, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Egypt, Assyria, Syria, etc.—that they also would be punished for their sins, and among other sins they mentioned the attitude which these heathen nations maintained toward the chosen people of God.

In these expostulations and exhortations, from time to time the prophets rose from the general to the particular. They said not only

that evil would follow a continuance in wrong-doing but they set down particular evils which should come to particular cities, to countries, and used these threatened judgments as arguments to persuade men to turn from sin.

Along with these prophecies of coming doom were the prophecies of coming deliverance. If Israel was to be punished for her sins, God would not forsake her in her suffering, but would, in time, grant her repentance and relief, and among these prophecies of hope were the great prophecies concerning the golden age, the millennial kingdom, the time when the Lord's prayer should be answered, when the millions upon millions of children who have prayed "Thy kingdom come" should find the kingdom of God here.

Fulfilled and Unfulfilled.

Some of these prophecies have unquestionably been fulfilled. Nobody doubts that Babylon has been destroyed; no one doubts that Tyre is at the present time a place for the spreading of nets; no one doubts that Egypt is today the basest of the kingdoms; no one doubts that Israel is today scattered throughout the nations of the world; no one doubts that the Jewish name is now become

a hissing and a by-word. To question any of these facts would be to prove oneself hopelessly ignorant.

I think it safe to say that no one at present doubts that these prophecies respecting the nations to which I have just referred were made before the event, in certain instances many years before the event. Those who say that the prophets did not foretell declare that these foretellings are the result of a happy guess, just as a man today might say that if Chicago continued to be as vile as she is she would be destroyed; but the destructions which are foretold for these sinning nations of the olden times are so exceedingly specific in character that it seems that an honest man can hardly accept this statement of the case.

The city of Babylon, for example, was one of the great cities of the world. Its monuments and palaces are, today, mentioned among the most celebrated ever known. There was no reason, at the time when the prophecies were uttered, to suppose that this city would be wiped out. A fairly intelligent man, knowing the rottenness of the nation, might easily have judged that it would suffer great reverses, that it would become far less important than it was; but that is true of a score

of great cities which are in existence today, and a person dealing thus with probabilities and without supernatural guidance might easily affirm that New York, or London, or Paris, or Pekin, if it did not repent, would suffer loss; but who would venture to declare that one of these cities should be wiped out, should never be rebuilt, and, if he did undertake to say this of some one of them, which one would he choose?

Damascus was a wicked city in those olden ages. Damascus deserved to be punished, was punished, but it was never declared that Damascus should cease to exist, as it was that Babylon and Tyre should be removed from the map. Babylon and Tyre were removed from the map. Tyre is today a collection of miserable huts. Babylon is a widespread desolation in which the Arab will not pitch his tent, nor the shepherd fold his flocks. It was declared that Babylon should be this kind of a place, and it is. Why were not similar judgments threatened upon Damascus? Damascus lives today, a city of one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, yet Damascus was a sinful city, as I have said above, deserved judgment and received it; but the prophets told in detail the ruin that was to come upon certain

cities, and their detailed descriptions have been fulfilled. This sort of work cannot be attributed to guessing—at least, men nowadays cannot guess this way. Thoughtful men do not dare to try. If fools rushed in where angels fear to tread, they would probably be confounded by the event.

The Prophecies of Jesus.

These prophecies were verbal and typical from the beginning of the creation up to the end of the Old Testament writing. In the Garden of Eden God promised Eve that one of her children should bruise the head of the serpent who had deceived her. No one, so far as I know, pretends to assign this prophecy to anyone but the Lord Jesus Christ. Directly thereafter we are told that Adam and Eve were clothed in the skins of beasts, but why were beasts slain? They were not, at that time, permitted for food. Why did God avail Himself of the skins of the beasts for the clothing of His sinful, ashamed children? The offerings of Cain and Abel seem to throw light on this question. Abel brought for his offering, from the flock, a slain lamb, and his offering was accepted. Why? Because of the confession implied and probably because it

was in obedience to divine direction; certainly sacrifice for sin came early into the history of the human race and sacrifices for sin were typical declarations that a great Sacrifice was to come, a Sacrifice which was actually to accomplish that which its foreshadowings never could do.

The Bible writers knew that it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin (Heb. 10:4). These offerings were perpetually renewed because, while they did atone for sin, they did not take it away. They were accepted for the sin confessed, but they must needs be perpetually renewed. But Jesus, by one offering, perfected forever those who are sanctified, and when the true Offering had come, the typical offerings ceased.

By what chance does it happen that blood offerings for sin have ceased throughout the entire world, except among a few savage tribes? What man can see the universal use of sacrifices up to the coming of Jesus and the universal cessation of sacrifices since He was here, without believing the prophecies which were made concerning Him?

As days went on, the shadows began to pass away and the realities began to exhibit themselves. Isaiah, in that wonderful fifty-third

chapter, which my Jewish friend undertook to explain away, draws a full-length portrait of Jesus Christ as a sufferer; and the same prophet speaks of the days when the suffering Saviour is to become the reigning King; when God's people are to be comforted and their enemies are to be under their feet. The very manner of His death is described, the disposition of His garments, the drinks which were to be offered to Him at the time of His crucifixion; the time of His slumber in the grave was distinctly foretold; His resurrection was predicted; and these events have come to pass.

There yet remains to be fulfilled the promise of the golden age, the kingdom of God on earth, the millennial reign of our Lord. That has not yet come to be, but those who read the former prophecies and remember for how many centuries men had to wait for their fulfilling, and yet how literally they have been fulfilled, find it easy to believe that that which remains shall yet be accomplished, and that, as the suffering Saviour, foretold, has come, and done His great work of redemption, so the kingly Saviour will come, destroying His enemies and establishing His kingdom among His people.

The Case of the Jews.

Associated with prophecies of the Messiah are always prophecies to be found concerning the Jews. For some reason they were God's chosen people—I do not think anyone can tell why—God does not tell why. He tells why He did *not* choose *them,* but He does not tell why He did choose them, except that He chose to choose. But here are the Jews. They have a life history now approximately of four thousand years. The prophets declared beforehand all that has come to them, not in general and indefinite terms, but specifically and in detail. No man can read what they say should come upon the Jews without saying to himself, "All this has been fulfilled." But there are prophecies concerning them which have not been fulfilled. It is declared, for example, that they shall yet dwell in their own land, the land which was given them by covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is declared that the streets of their cities shall be filled with boys and girls playing, that the fruitfulness of their land shall return, that the scattered and dissevered people shall be united, that Israel shall no longer vex Ephraim, that Ephraim shall no longer envy

Judah. It is declared that they shall have a King who is to reign in righteousness. The Jews have no king, have not had a king since Solomon, nearly or quite three thousand years ago, yet it is declared that they shall have a King and that He shall reign in righteousness, not to be such a king as on the other side the sea at this time is sending young men to death by millions, for no crime, simply because of his own lawless, unbridled ambition; and it is declared that, when the Jews have been restored to their own land, when the land has been redeemed from its centuries of desolation, when their King shall sit upon the throne of David and reign in righteousness, the saints shall reign with Him.

All these prophecies are before us. No one claims that they have been fulfilled. People who do not believe the Bible—some of them—declare that they cannot be fulfilled. Some people who do believe the Bible in general, when they come to these great prophecies, hesitate and doubt. These latter prophecies await the unfolding years, but as men waited for centuries before Jesus came to suffer, so men can afford to wait for centuries, if need be, until He comes to reign. But as after the

waiting time He did come to suffer, so we have reason to believe that He will yet come to reign.

Evidently the prophets have foretold; evidently some of their foretellings have been fulfilled, and it is equally evident that some of their prophecies yet remain to bless the world in their fulfilling.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PICKAX AND SPADE.

The world, though it is an insignificant dot among the planets and stars, is to us important. It is our home for the present. It has been dignified by the presence of God manifest in the flesh. It is yet to be honored by His presence as a reigning Sovereign. It is of particular interest to us, who have been redeemed by His precious blood, because in that day we also shall reign with Him. The kingdom is His, but the kingdom belongs to His saints as well.

The world is also interesting as an object of study. Geology, digging down through the rock foundations, teaches us a thousand things about the thought of God in creation. The plant life and the animal life of the world, the flowers that bloom on the hills, and the trees which clothe the mountains with their shaggy forests, all these are wonderful. The differences of soil are most remarkable, and the differences of climate.

I have ridden for a whole day, in the state

of Texas, where nothing was in sight on the ground but rocks and sand, yet one can ride for days in Texas where nothing is in sight but fruitful soil and its products.

A friend of mine who lived in India, once said to me that they had ample rain in the region where he lived for the vegetation of the entire year, but that this rain came within a period of ninety days. All the rest of the year there was no rain, so, unless in some way this supply should be stored up in the earth, famines were probable, though the soil was fruitful and the rainfall abundant.

Those of us who dwell in the garden spots of the world have a right to marvel and the duty of gratitude. The timely rains, the green grass, the luxuriant foliage of the trees, the marvelous variety in the flowers, the vegetables, the fruits, all these are occasions of perpetual wonder and gratitude.

I have been led to this train of thought by thinking of those marvelous countries where God has so wonderfully preserved the witnesses to His Word. It is only a few years, comparatively speaking, since pickax and spade began to do their work in Bible lands. For centuries nobody cared to do any work of excavation. If men had cared to do it, the

inhabitants were largely so savage that it would have been unsafe to undertake it; but the slow-moving centuries have passed. Nations that recognize the Bible have obtained military power over the whole world. Even Lassa, the capital of Tibet, has been occupied by the British army. Germany has been pushing a railroad down the Euphrates Valley. Africa has been parceled out among so-called Christian nations of the world.

While military power has thus come to these nations, intellectual life has also been their portion. It is now perhaps five hundred years since great universities began to be—overcrowded and formless at first but throbbing with intellectual life—virgin soil for scholarly men, and as the years have passed, learning has become more exact and the field continually widened.

Among other things, men have become interested in the languages of dead nations. Stones covered with inscriptions, sides of mountains covered with inscriptions, baked tablets covered with inscriptions, cylindrical stones covered with inscriptions, one by one, sometimes hundreds by hundreds, occasionally thousands by thousands, these silent, elo-

quent witnesses have come to the stand to tell their story.

Sargon and the Hittites.

When I was a boy, one of the proofs I used to see occasionally that the Bible was an untrustworthy book was the fact that the Bible talked about Sargon as an Assyrian king whereas there never had been any Sargon. The lists of Assyrian kings were known and this man was not found among them. For many years this remained true and it was impossible to confirm the Bible account of his expedition against the Holy Land from the monuments; but men kept at work—Rawlinson, Layard, Murchison and a host of lesser lights were busy with pickax and spade. They excavated on the site of Nineveh, they excavated on the site of Babylon. I myself saw such people at work under the foundations of the exhumed city of Pompeii. Permits have been granted by Governments for excavations in Egypt, for excavations in Turkey, for excavations in Assyria, for excavations in Arabia—all over the East these armies of pioneers have been working for the revelation of the long-forgotten past.

Of course their work was rewarded. Every now and again some monument was discovered which told the story of life in the long ago, and often these stories came in touch with Bible narratives. Stories of the deluge, stories respecting social and political customs, bodies of law, what not. Now among the rest was found a cylinder containing an account of the expedition of Sargon, King of Assyria, against the Holy Land; the victories which he obtained, the ruin which he wrought, all were clearly set forth. Then men who had refused to believe the Word of God believed the old stone which had been buried in a dry place where its inscriptions were not seriously injured for centuries. I believed the stone, too. I valued the stone as a corroborative witness, but the witness-in-chief was quite sufficient for me.

I do not understand how men can wish to confirm stones by the Bible. I desire to confirm the Bible by stones, and if I do not find any stones to confirm the Bible, I believe the Bible just the same.

No Dissenting Voice.

It is a singular fact that up to this present hour no tablet, mountain inscription, monu-

mental inscription, nothing of the kind revealed by pickax and spade has been found to contradict a single Biblical statement of fact. This is a most wonderful thing, when we consider it in all its bearings. If, from time to time, we should find statements which did contradict the Bible, they would not affect the truth of the Bible to my mind, for the character of this Book is so thoroughly established, it has lasted out so many centuries, millenniums, it has performed such a beneficent work for individuals, families, cities, nations, that, even if I should find that some old heathen, three thousand years ago, declared that a portion of this Word was untrue, I would not believe him; I would believe the Word; but I am glad, nevertheless, that these old heathens were more sensible, apparently, than many of the alleged scholars of our time, and that up to this present hour no single instance is known in which a monument of antiquity has contradicted the testimony of the Word of God.

On the other hand, scores, perhaps hundreds of antiquities, have been uncovered and placed in the museums throughout the world which clearly and definitely confirm the testimony of Holy Scripture. Take for example the Hittites. I never knew anybody to object

to the Bible account of the Hittites until recently, but a few years ago someone criticized the Bible account of this ancient, wicked people, and I think said that there were no such folk, yet now the history of the Hittites has been revealed by pickax and spade.

It is one of my dreams that yet in the old world there will be found, hidden away in some cave, dry and safe for manuscripts, the original copies of the prophets, perhaps the very words which Moses wrote. Why not? Continually we are pushing the lines farther and farther back into the shadows of the past. Today manuscripts and monuments are in hand which a few years ago were entirely undreamed of. Who is to draw the line and say, Thus far shalt thou go and no farther?

I affirm nothing as to what is to be. I do not claim to be a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I do claim to know a little of the history of the excavations in the far East, as related to Bible narratives; and that which I know I affirm, have already affirmed, expect to repeat frequently, that the pickax and the spade never contradict the Word of God, that so far as they say anything they affirm the Word of God; and I believe that their revelations are not concluded, that there is yet to

be a great body of evidence for the truth of Scripture thus revealed which, at the present time, is visible only to the all-seeing eye of God.

CHAPTER XII.

WHY DO WE BELIEVE THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE TO HAVE BEEN WROUGHT?

I have spoken, in the chapter on Jesus and the Bible, of His testimony to these miracles. That would be quite sufficient for me if there were no other evidence. I believe Jesus Christ to have been God, manifest in the flesh. I believe that it was by Him that God made the worlds, that He was the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, that He upholds all things by the word of His power, and that when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:2, 3). This being my faith, of course I need no testimony to the miracles of the Bible except His testimony.

When He certified to the Old Testament, telling us to search it, and when He certified to the New Testament, telling us that He would give those who wrote it the Holy Spirit so that they might remember the things which

they ought to say, that is quite sufficient for me; but because it is proper to call two or three witnesses, even when one's testimony is enough, I propose in this chapter to speak a little in detail of the reasons for believing the miracles of the Bible to have been wrought, as the Bible declares.

I shall omit the general testimony of Jesus to the whole Book, though I may speak of His dealing with some individual cases, and I think I will begin with His reference to the case of Jonah. I do this because I consider the manner in which this prophet's work has been treated so shameless and wicked.

Three Days in the Earth.

Jesus was approaching the end of His earthly ministry. The quiet years at Nazareth, where He sat in the evening with Joseph and Mary and learned from them the story of His people; the stormy years of public teaching, when He was misunderstood by His disciples, by the sons of Mary, hated and hunted by the ecclesiastical leaders of His time—these years were done. He was passing out into that frightful period which closed His earthly career. He was trying to get His disciples to understand the events which were

at hand, that they might not be disappointed by them, but, on the other hand, might be energized by them for the great work to which they were called. So He began to tell them about the things which He must suffer.

Among other things he said, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). Let us remember the solemn occasion on which these words were uttered, the time in His life, the purpose which He had in view, and let me ask any thoughtful person who reads whether or not on such an occasion our Lord would have been likely to trifle with historic fact, or whether we have a right to believe that He would have reported things as they actually are.

Of course I am not undertaking to give the law to anybody else; I am simply expressing the judgments which seem to me necessarily true when I say I find it utterly impossible to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ would have made this reference if Jonah had not been swallowed by a great fish, retained for three days in his stomach, and then vomited forth on the dry land.

I do not here cover the ground which I

have formerly traversed in reference to the effect of this miracle on his preaching. I am speaking of our Lord Jesus, and I ask whether or not He would have been likely at such a time, for such a purpose, to have made a historic reference which had no foundation in fact. Anyone who chooses to believe this and is able to believe it may; I cannot and do not. I believe just as much in the historicity of Jonah and the truth of the narrative concerning his flight, the manner in which God checked it, and the resulting preaching, as I believe in the existence of George Washington, the Declaration of Independence, the existence of King John of England, or the Magna Charta.

The Miracles of Jesus.

Suppose that Jesus was the Person that the Bible declares Him to be, God manifest in the flesh; suppose that the Creator of the universe elected to occupy human form and to dwell in this world for a number of years, teaching and suffering that He might bring men to Himself. Allow, I say, that this is true. If it were true, would it be natural that this marvelous Being should come into the world as other men had? He must be born

of woman, for He must partake of our natures if He was to sympathize with us in our temptations and trials and atone for our sins, but would it have been natural that He should be born as other men are? If God should create the infant life in Mary, the mother, then He would, on the one hand, represent Deity, and, on the other, could be touched with the infirmities of man. He would thus become qualified to be a mediator between God and man. If God was thus to take upon Himself human form, would it be natural that stars should shine supernaturally? Would it be natural that angels should break through the skies to sing and that shepherds and wise men should be moved strangely at His advent? If God should really take upon Himself human form, becoming for us a man, would it be natural that He should certify His divine character by works, such as no man can do? I say, would we naturally expect this? Would it be natural that He should heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, give feet to the lame, cleansing to the leper, peace and quiet to the demon-driven; that He should preach the Gospel to the poor?

If men were to take such a person with

wicked hands and crucify and kill Him, would it be natural that the heavens should be dark, that the earth should tremble, that graves should be opened and that dead saints should come forth? Would it be natural that He should rise from the dead, show Himself to His friends and empower His followers to do the sort of works that He did, that their testimony might be believed? Would it be natural that He should say to men, "If you do not believe me, believe the works"?

In other words, are the miracles of both the Old and New Testaments such occurrences as a rational, thoughtful man would reasonably expect in the times and under the circumstances which then existed? It seems to me that for a reasonable being there is only one answer to questions like these, and I believe the miracles of the Old and New Testaments for the reasons above stated, if for no other.

There are many other proofs, but these would be sufficient for me if they stood alone.

The Story of the Church.

I have referred several times in this writing to the miraculous history of the Christian church. It is, however, a great subject, has never yet been exhausted and is not likely to

be, so I make no apology for referring to it in this connection.

I have spoken of the law of cause and effect. This is a principle which is imbedded in the reason of the race. Every little child understands it as well as a philosopher. He looks from the event to the cause precisely as the most scholarly man in the world would do.

Now the church is a tremendous effect. I admit all its defects, all the imperfections that arise from our human weakness. These are neither denied nor forgotten; but the church is a tremendous effect. It is a wonderful thing to have hundreds of millions of people profess one faith. It is most remarkable that men, in the struggle for life, should set aside hundreds of millions of dollars for the erection of churches and the maintenance of religious exercises of various sorts.

There are today twenty-five thousand natives of European and American countries, missionaries in foreign lands. The tests to which they are subjected are not so severe as they were fifty or one hundred years ago, but still these people leave their friends, their comfortable homes; they go into streets which are reeking with filth, into homes which are swarming with vermin; they yet travel in re-

gions where life is in hourly danger, and all this they do, twenty-five thousand men and women, to preach the Church of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of the kingdom, the Saviour of the world.

A Jew was recently sitting in the great hall built by the Los Angeles Bible Institute. That group of buildings with the land cost approximately two millions of dollars. The great hall seats over four thousand persons. The Jew sat there wonderingly through an hour or so, and, the service closing, said to a friend of mine, "There must be something in the Christian religion or men would not put so much money as there is in this building into it." He was a reasonable Jew. Any sensible man would say the same. People do not spend their money by hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars without some sort of a reason; but that great building, beautiful and expensive as it is, is like a grain of sand compared with a mountain range when measured against the monies which have been put into Christian churches, schools and enterprises of all sorts from the beginning until now.

Here, I say, we have a tremendous effect. One who does not think very much of course will not appreciate it, but no man who thinks

can consider the history of the church without being awe-stricken.

The Church Built on the Miracles.

Now the Christian church is the only institution in the world which, from its origin, demanded to be received on the truth of supernatural works. The Christian church did demand to be so received and was so received from the beginning. As I have already reminded you, Jesus said, "If you do not believe me, believe the works" (John 10:38); and again, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith unto the sick of the palsy, Rise up and walk" (Matt. 9:6).

We are to remember that the miracles of the Bible were not like the spiritualistic miracles of our time. They were not wrought in a corner. When our Lord was about to heal a sick man, or raise a dead one, He did not first get the invalid or the corpse into a room with a handful of adherents about Him and turn down the lights. His miracles were wrought before men, most of them, perhaps every one, in broad daylight. He was surrounded in many cases not alone by crowds of friends but by deadly enemies, enemies who

hated Him to death, who hunted Him like a wolf to His very Cross.

These miracles were preached, especially the great miracle of the resurrection, everywhere. The apostles did not wait until they got to Antioch or Rome or Corinth to declare the resurrection. Within a few weeks after it occurred, Peter stood up in the city where Jesus was murdered and where He rose from the dead and said to the Jews, "You crucified and murdered Jesus Christ, but God has raised Him from the dead." From this as a center, the doctrine of the resurrection was preached wherever the Gospel went. It was not only preached, it was believed, and it was not believed in a lazy, half and half fashion, but it was believed by men and women so unquestionably that in testimony of their faith they went cheerfully to die in every horrible fashion that the ingenuity of devils and men could invent. Simple beheading or hanging would have been the height of mercy compared with the manner in which these brave brothers and sisters of ours went singing to their doom.

From that day to this present hour, the miracles have been part and parcel of the teaching of the church throughout the whole

world. Common people have never found it difficult to believe the record. Everywhere infidelity in regard to the supernatural has been the work of paid defenders of the Faith —more is the shame and more is the pity; but everyone knows that this is true.

We are in the last days, and the darkness deepens as the sun goes down, but if the night comes, the morning also comes, and soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings. It behooves us who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. At such a time as we do not think, the Son of man comes; and when He comes, it is well that He finds us watching and working.

CHAPTER XIII.

MODERN MIRACLES.

Persons who object to the miracles of the Bible frequently remind us that bogus signs and wonders are common in our time. They talk of the alleged miracles of Spiritualism, Roman Catholicism and Christian Science. They declare that these miracles are very largely fraudulent and they thus seek to throw a shade of doubt upon the wonders of the Word of God. Respecting these alleged miracles, two or three things may be said.

In the first place, it is not necessary to deny that some of these alleged marvels are actually true. The Bible recognizes the fact that demons have power to work miracles (Rev. 13:13). They have far greater power than we, why should they not do works impossible to us, that is, works which are to us miracles and wonders? Still further, there is an element of truth in all these systems. The Roman catechism says: "We receive all gifts, even eternal life, solely through the death and merits of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This is true, no matter who says it. There have been many thousands of humble Christians in the Romish church. Luther and Melanchthon were in the Romish church when they were converted. Fénelon and Madame Guyon lived and died in that church and they were near to the heart of God. Who is to prove that humble souls like these may not have been permitted at times to work signs and wonders in the name of Jesus Christ? I certainly have no such commission.

Spiritualism was a reaction against gross and crude materialism. Largely fraudulent as it has always been, nevertheless it is true we are surrounded by spirit intelligences, and it is true that they influence us in various ways. The Spirit of God is our teacher, if we will have Him. If not, we will be taught by Satan, and Satan has a thousand imps ready to run his errands and do his bidding.

Christian Science is a system which, like Seventh Day Adventism, seeks to live, not by attempting to save sinners, but by pulling uninformed, dissatisfied, unhappy Christians out of churches. I have heard of godless, wicked men who have been saved by the teaching of Christian Science, but I never chanced to know one yet. All of my friends who have

become Christian Scientists were professed Christians before they became Scientists. I never knew one such person who was living a grossly immoral life. They have, without exception, been refined, intelligent, pleasant people. Those of them whom I have known have never been desperately poor. The rule is, I think, that they are well-to-do, if not wealthy. A man who is really up against the serious things of life can hardly accept a system which teaches him that he can never be sick but that if he is, somebody can help him by looking at him or thinking about him two dollars' worth.

Since these people are very largely those who have confessed Christian faith, who have the Bible, and who, in a way, believe it, who is to declare that God will never work wonders for them? Certainly I will not. This will do for a first remark.

The second one is this. Many of these alleged miracles do not hold up. Under spiritual excitement, a sort of an ecstasy, suffering people imagine themselves to be helped for a while, but realities press upon them and they fall back into their suffering and ill-health. Dr. Dowie was accustomed to tell people to throw away their crutches and say they were

healed and could walk when they were not healed and could not walk, and when these people came back to him for their crutches he refused to give them up. He would rather they should suffer than that he should be discredited. Of course there is only one end for a teacher like that.

Another fact to be stated regarding these alleged miracles is that many of them are simply frauds and lies. Why do the Spiritualists always want the lights turned down before they have a materialization scene? If the work is genuine and real, it can be wrought in daylight as well as in the dark; but who ever heard of Spiritualists proposing to work their miracles in the midst of a crowd where all men can see? They want a cabinet, a darkened room, something or other so that they can fool the people who are willing to pay them for being fooled.

Another fact which is to be stated regarding these miracles is that the failures far outnumber the alleged successes. I have myself, in the church of St. Anne de Beaupre, seen stacks of crutches and festoons of crutches and trusses. I would be afraid even to guess how many there were in these stacks and festoons. Certainly I think they would be num-

bered by hundreds; but right around those stacks of crutches and under those festoons of crutches and trusses were poor lame people creeping around on hands and knees trying to be helped but unhelped; blind people led by the hand, praying to see but remaining blind. It was pitiful beyond expression and it rendered one indignant at the priests who were fattening on their miseries.

Another thing which should be said regarding these alleged miracles is that they lead people to wonder at and admire systems or men rather than Jesus Christ. A friend of mine was in a spiritualistic séance. The medium was in a trance state. My friend, being permitted to ask a question, asked this medium, who professed to represent someone in the spirit world, "Have you seen anything of Jesus Christ since you were there?" And the spirit answered, "I have been here ten years and I never have seen or heard of such a person."

A friend of mine, who was a very earnest Christian Scientist, was telling me what Christian Science had done for him. I said to him, "Was it Christian Science or Jesus Christ that healed you?" "Oh," he said, "of course it was Jesus Christ." "Well," I replied, "as

it was Jesus Christ, why do you not say something about Him once in a while? Why are you always talking about Christian Science? I have heard you say nothing about Jesus Christ. If He is the one who has helped you, I think you owe it to Him to say something about it." This friend of mine was not a bad person. He was a gentleman. His wife was for several years my stenographer. She was a lovely young woman and is now a happy and honored wife. They did not, either one of them, intend to be untrue to the religion which they professed before they became Christian Scientists, but the system is a poison. It gets insensibly into the blood and people are ruined as to their faith before they know it.

These dear young people, whom I love truly, had ceased to think about Jesus Christ. When they were checked up and required to stop, they remembered that He was their Saviour; but naturally they did not think of Him at all; they thought of Christian Science, of Mrs. Eddy, of Science and Health. This sort of thing filled the horizon of the mind.

It was so with Catholicism. The Roman Catholic thinks of Mary. He thinks of the priests, he thinks of the church, he thinks very

little about the Saviour. It is a commonplace that in the cathedrals the altars of the saints and of Mary have far more gifts than the altar of Jesus Christ. He is preached by the system, but He is buried under the prominence of the priests and of the sacraments.

Another thing which ought to be said respecting these alleged miracles is that they do not lead to holiness of character. Why should they? There is no being in the universe except Jesus Christ who can make a sinful man holy, and any system which fastens the thought on any other one than Him will necessarily make men unholy rather than holy.

I read recently of a devout Catholic in South America who had been attending the Catholic church all his life, going around occasionally for absolution and the sacrament. The missionary spoke to him about Jesus and he said, "Who is He? I never heard of Him." He had been taught to pray, "Mary, mother of God, pity us. Mary, mother of God, help us. Holy Mary, mother of God, intercede for us;" but he knew nothing about Jesus Christ.

The whole list of false faiths from the beginning until now is of one sort in regard

to Jesus. As in the Masonic lodges, the Odd Fellow lodges, so in all the lodges of our time which are distinctly religious in character, Jesus Christ is outlawed. Satan knows that Jesus Christ is the Saviour. When the miracles were wrought in the times of the apostles, and Peter had preached the resurrection to the men who had murdered Jesus, the people cried out, "What must we do to be saved?" They knew they were sinners, they wanted to be saved. The same teaching produces the same effects today. Where men believe the Bible, the miracles of the Bible, the teachings of the Bible, they are rebuked because of their sins, they are ashamed of them, they are sorry for them, they get them forgiven through the blood of Jesus and they live new lives; but false faiths, heathen religions and sham miracles have never produced such results. From the nature of the case they never can.

The miracles of the Bible in every essential particular differ from these frauds which are palmed off upon ignorant and foolish people in our time. In the first place, the former were, practically all of them, works of mercy—none of them wrought for the sake of creating wonder. The fevered, the leprous,

the lame, the deaf, the dumb, the blind, all these and multitudes of others were healed by the touch of their teachers and went their way to praise Jesus Christ Who had had compassion upon them.

These miracles, as I have said above, were all of them wrought in daylight, in the presence of numbers of people. When our Lord was to raise the daughter of Jairus, though He would not permit the howling multitude to come into the death room, He would not go in alone. He took with Him three disciples and the mother and father of the maiden. In the presence of these five witnesses He said to the dead child, "Damsel, I say unto thee arise; and straightway she sat up."

In Spiritualistic circles frequently the medium says he or she cannot work because of the presence of unbelievers; but the Bible miracles were, practically all of them, wrought in the presence of unbelievers. They were wrought for the sake of unbelievers, that the unbelievers might believe.

As I have just been saying, the genuine miracles, the miracles of the Bible, lead to repentance, to restitution, to faith and joy; the fictitious miracles lead to wonder but not

to gladness. The people say, Let us go again and see if we can see another. They do not say, We have seen and are satisfied.

In the accounts of the founding of the church, over and again the joy of the disciples is mentioned as a distinguishing characteristic. They were glad because they were saved. They were saved because they believed that what Jesus had done for other people He could do for them. So the miracles of the Word of God are in a class by themselves, differing absolutely and in every particular from these fraudulent ones which are taught in our time.

Which Will You Have?

Someone has said that life is a series of choices. He might have said that these choices are continuous, that each moment of conscious existence furnishes its alternative, and compels its decisions.

It has been often said—it is always true—that man is incurably religious. In some way or other he must get to what he believes is divine. He is never satisfied with himself. He is conscious of his need and he is conscious of his sin. Until in some way or other he is, or believes himself to be, in the presence of a helping power which is sufficient, a sav-

ing power that can pardon and cleanse, he can have no rest. "The wicked are like the troubled sea," they cannot rest. This is not because of some baleful design on the part of God, but because of the nature of the case. A sinning soul is as much out of harmony with itself as it is out of harmony with the will of God. Parallel lines never cross. Divergent lines, in the same plane, must first or last interfere.

I am led to this line of thought by the fact that man must have a God, that is, some being whom he looks upon as equal to his need. He must have some religion, that is, some system of faith and practice which he thinks will conduct to virtue and happiness. He must, somewhere or other, come in touch with the supernatural. His nature requires that he should. He does not will to be this kind of a person. He has been made this sort of a person and he cannot change his essential being. What God created him he will remain; therefore, my readers and the friends of my readers are in this situation. They must accept the wonders of the Word or they must believe these fraudulent miracles, which by various systems are being foisted upon the world. It is not a question

whether a person will believe in miracles or not. Men necessarily believe in them, that is to say, they believe in works which are beyond their own power. No sane man believes that he causes the sun to shine. No sane man believes that the shining sun is without a cause. Nature abhors a vacuum, and the worst emptiness in this world would be an emptiness of God. All other emptiness may be endured, but this would be fatal to the universe, so my friends must choose.

I have often referred to a saying of a Wheaton alumnus, an Iowa judge who returned after some years to the college to deliver an address. I remember only one sentence which he uttered. That has been with me, I think, a thousand times since I heard him say it. His statement was this—"There are some persons so constituted that they can believe anything except the truth." There is not a particle of doubt that this is a fact. Some persons are so constituted that they can believe anything except the truth. The Bible speaks of certain people who are given over to believe a lie. What a frightful thing this would be, to be given over to believe a lie, so that the person should really accept it, trust it, believe it, though it was a lie.

I heard a sermon recently about forgetting God. The preacher concluded the sermon by saying, "What is the end of forgetting God?" Very thoughtfully and solemnly he read the words of Jeremiah: "Therefore, behold I, even I will utterly forget you and I will forsake you and the city that I gave you and your fathers and will cast you out of my presence and I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you and a perpetual shame which shall not be forgotten" (Jer. 23:39, 40). The preacher did not read all the words which I have written here. He stopped with the words "forget you," but because all are related, I choose to write the whole.

God says that His people go into captivity because they have no knowledge. I think most unbelievers consider themselves very well informed. They think they are unbelievers because they have knowledge, whereas God says they are unbelievers because they lack it. While this ignorance is general and exhibited in many ways, I think there is no one subject of which unbelieving men are so ignorant as they are of the Word of God.

I have never shunned the presence of or conversation with unbelieving men. I have coveted it, both for my own information and

in the hope that I might do such men some little good, and God has, from time to time, rewarded my hope and faith by the work He has been willing to do through me. I mention this fact to say that I have never yet known an unbeliever who has been fairly well acquainted with God's Word. A peculiar truth regarding these men is, however, that they, almost all of them, believe themselves to be very well informed concerning it. Over and again they have said to me, "I know all about the Bible. My father and mother made me read it when I was a little boy. I always had to go to church and Sunday school. I got too much of it. I have studied it from beginning to end." And when I have asked them the simplest question respecting it, instantly their knowledge has dissolved into the ignorance which they had denied.

I remember well a young fellow who sat with me in a coach on the Burlington Line many years ago. As I sat down and we entered into conversation, I said to him, "Are you a Christian man?" and he replied, "No, I am a Bob Ingersoll man." I said to him, "Why are you a Bob Ingersoll man?" He said, "Well, I am down on the Bible." I said, "Are you; why are you down on the Bible?"

He said, "Because it justifies crime." "Is that possible?" I said. "I did not know that. What crimes does the Bible justify?" He said, "The crime of adultery." I said, "Is that possible? I have studied the Bible quite a bit. I never found that place. Perhaps you will show me the place." By this time I had taken out my Bible and handed it over to him. He colored and said, "Oh, I do not know the place, but I know it is so." "Why," I said, "I am very much surprised. I did not know that it was so. Perhaps this is the verse to which you refer"; so I turned to Leviticus 20:10: "The adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death." "Perhaps this is the verse you had in mind." He blushed even more deeply and said, "No, that is not the verse." This young man knew as much about the Bible as most unbelievers with whom I have come in close contact.

The Book of Hezekiah.

I read years ago of an unbeliever who was talking with a humble Christian and was discussing the Bible. The unbeliever said that the Bible was an infamous book; that it was not fit to be read; that it ought to be put out

of existence; that it was a shame for a man to have such a book in his house. The Christian man said to him, "You do not think the whole Bible is as bad as that, do you?" He said, "Indeed I do; it is bad from beginning to end. It is not fit to exist." And the believer said to him, "Well, take the book of Hezekiah. Do you not think the book of Hezekiah has some good things in it?" And he replied, "The book of Hezekiah? That is the meanest book there is in the whole Bible." This seemed to me, at the time I first read it, doubtful, so twice I tried the trap which my friend furnished, on some unsuspecting infidel with whom I was talking. In each case the unbeliever declared himself to be well acquainted with the Bible, to have studied it since a little boy, to have had it forced upon him by parents and teachers, to have been particularly disgusted with it because he found it such an obnoxious book; and each time I asked him about the book of Hezekiah and each time he said, for substance, what the narrator of the incident above recorded said; that the book of Hezekiah was about the worst book there was in the Bible.

We are shamelessly negligent of the Bible. We ought to repent and do far better than we

have done; but unbelievers, especially those who declare themselves to be thoroughly well informed about the Bible are, so far as my observation extends, grossly ignorant of all its teachings.

Which of the Two Will You Choose?

Let me remind you once more for yourself and more than that, for your friends, that men are to choose. When you say you will not choose, you choose. When you say you will not choose until tomorrow, you choose today. You are at liberty to choose which you will, but you are not at liberty not to choose; so let me once more repeat, Which will you have, this wonderful Book, with its wonders which are so natural, which *were* so necessary, which *are* so necessary, which brought such unmixed gladness to those who experienced them; or will you have the emptiness and deceit of some false system which comes to you in some hour of need, when you must have something to depend upon, and offers itself to your weakness, perhaps to your terror? If you will not have God, then you will have to put up with yourself and with the false gods which men who feel themselves alone in the universe are certain to accept.

CHAPTER XIV.

A FEW WORDS IN CONCLUSION.

All of my friends know me as a busy man. I began my life-task when I was twenty years of age and have since that time very seldom known what it was to have a day of idleness. Twice it has seemed that I must rest, and God has, through generous friends, graciously provided for the need, but the rule has been that I have toiled each day, oftentimes through many hours.

I did not for years find myself able to write books, but as I found years creeping on—I ought not to say creeping, rather rushing—I saw that if I was ever to leave my testimony in accessible form for those who were to come after me, I must be about the work. So I have written, in hurried, imperfect fashion, four small books, each of them dealing with subjects which seemed to me important. In most remarkable ways God provided me publishers, for I could not have published them at my own expense; and what was more delightful, perhaps more wonderful, He has in

most instances provided many readers. I have received over and again, from far-distant places, even from the islands of the sea, testimony that God had blessed the word which He gave me to utter.

This has encouraged me to write the pages which you have read. I have always been interested in books on the truth of the Word of God. This question seems to me so absolutely fundamental that I have availed myself of books, little and large, on the subject, and expect to continue to do so. One might ask, Why not select those books which have already been published and put time and money into the circulation of them and in this way multiply the number of those who have an unshaking faith in this unshakable Book? I reply, as I have respecting a former publication, that I could not do any large work in this way to begin with, and, if I did, the testimony would not be mine but that of another. So far as God permits, I would like to utter my own testimony, to have men know some of the reasons why I believe, why I say I know the Bible to be God's Word. I would like to have all the people who trust me at all share with me in the faith I have in the disputed things in this marvelous Book, for the

disputed things seem to me oftentimes the most important.

If men believe in the miracles of the Bible, they are not likely to doubt anything else they find in it. If men believe that the Bible is really inspired of God, that holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, they are not likely to treat with ignorant contempt any portions of such a Book; so I have, in the midst of many cares and labors, most imperfectly written the words which are herein contained. I have tested them, as well as I am able, I believe, without the slightest disposition to accept anything but what is true.

I am thankful that I have lived to write these words, for, while I do not think that men are generally converted by arguments, I know that men are often confirmed in a faith which they have inherited or received without sufficient examination, by having exhibited the truths involved. Therefore I am, as I have said, thankful to be permitted to share these reflections with my fellow travelers to the judgment bar of God.

I do not believe that, apart from the question of personal salvation, any more important subject will ever be presented to the mind of a rational being than this one, "Who wrote

the Bible?" When we reflect on what the Bible says on this subject for itself, how continually it declares itself to contain the word of God, and not the word of man; when we remember how the Holy Spirit Himself has contrasted the written Word with visions and voices, which, important in their time and place, are nevertheless less important than the precious words which God has written for our learning; when we remember how the Bible insists on the possibility of knowledge as to the great questions awakened by our faith so that we may say "I know" rather than "I believe"; when we consider the miraculous deeds done by the fathers, recorded in this Book, confirmed by so many infallible tokens; when we reflect upon the prophecies which have been already fulfilled and meditate upon those which yet remain; when we think of the manner in which God stored up, under heaps of dirt, in distant lands, proofs of this Book's truthful character, hiding these proofs away from the eyes of men for thousands of years and bringing them forth in our time and spreading them before the whole world; when we reflect on the marvelous difference between the miracles recorded in the Bible and the miracles recorded by the false faiths of our time;

when we consider what the Bible has done for the world, what it has done for us—I think we must always feel that we have here a priceless treasure, a pearl of great price, nay, a string of pearls forming a glorious ornament fit for the throat of a queen or the throne of a king.

What Follows?

If the things set forth in this little book are even approximately true, it follows that we, first, should make this Book more and more the man of our counsel, the light to our feet, the lamp to our path. This is not difficult, provided we are determined. If we are not determined, it will be not only difficult but impossible. Satan will furnish a thousand reasons for neglecting the Word of God, if we are willing to have him lay out our work. The pressure of duty, the claims of pleasures, all these will make it impossible for us to become men and women of the Book, unless we have determined that we will be. If we are so determined, we shall be able to find time or make time, and the helps to a knowledge of the Word are now more abundant and more inexpensive than ever before. He who wills may know; he who wills not will not know.

In the second place, while we ought to know the Book better than we do, our chief failures have been, not in the line of knowledge, but in the line of obedience. No man will read these words who has not known better than he has done. I have known far better than I have done. So while knowledge is an important thing, obedience is all-important, and we shall find that our knowledge of the Word will be broadened and heightened and intensified by every effort to obey. "Thy words have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee." So said the great singer of Israel, so we also should say; if we do this, we shall find that hiding God's words in our hearts will accomplish for us the thing which David hoped to have for himself.

And third and last, if we know this Book and obey this Book we shall find it so beautiful, so lovely, that we shall wish with our whole hearts to pass it on to other people. Heaven and earth will pass away, but these words which God has spoken through His Spirit and through His Son will never pass away.

With a great love for you, whom I have never seen, whom probably I shall never see, and for this Word which I have seen, which

I have imperfectly known, which I have imperfectly obeyed, but which has nevertheless wrought for me so many blessings that I cannot remember nor describe them, and with the desire that you and it may come into loving fellowship for all the days of your earthly life, that you may enjoy the Author of this Book through all the ages of eternity, I desire to be considered in the love and work of Jesus your true and faithful friend.

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